

Common Ground

How Deep Are the Roots?

Carey McWilliams

EACH MAN IS AN ISLAND John Caswell Smith, Jr.

PRIEST ON A WHITE HORSE Isabel Currier

GRASS ROOTS AND CITY BLOCKS

Rudolph M. Wittenberg

FOR EQUALITY IN NATURALIZATION

Richard J. Walsh

THE PACHUCO PATOIS Beatrice Griffith

OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICA William S. Bernard

AMERICAN ABORIGINAL SOCIETIES

COME INTO THEIR OWN John Collier

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To further an appreciation of what each group has contributed to America, to uphold the freedom to be different, and to encourage the growth of an American culture which will be truly representative of all the elements that make up the American people.

To overcome intolerance and discrimination because of national origin, race, or creed.

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HOW DEEP ARE THE ROOTS?

CAREY McWILLIAMS

IN THE summer of 1877, Joseph Seligman, the New York banker, was bluntly and noisily refused accommodations for himself and his family at the Grand Union Hotel at Saratoga Springs. Here, simply stated, was the first major overt manifestation of anti-Semitism in the United States. This is not to say, of course, that minor incidents had not previously occurred; nor would it be accurate to say that Jews were everywhere treated with perfect equality prior to 1877. But, by and large, the record up to this point had been free of overt manifestations of anti-Semitism.

Both the wide publicity given the Saratoga Springs "incident" and the wealth of comment which it aroused indicate that this initial manifestation of anti-Semitic prejudice came as a distinct shock to American public opinion. William Cullen Bryant, in an editorial, said that "a prejudice so opposed to the spirit of American institutions" could have only a momentary existence in this country and urged the Seligmans "to view with scientific curiosity, rather than personal annoyance, the survival, in such a remnant, of a mediaeval prejudice." Today one is impressed with the air of surprise and incredulity reflected in the editorial comments devoted to the incident. That it should have

been regarded as utterly anachronistic and completely at variance with contemporary custom is the best proof that incidents of this sort were virtually unknown in 1877. Much the same surprise was occasioned, when, at about the same time, a prominent Jewish lawyer was denied membership in the New York Bar Association (see comments of George William Curtis in Harper's for July, 1877).

To appreciate the significance of the Saratoga Springs incident, however, the principals must be identified. Joseph Seligman had emigrated from Bavaria in 1837 because, so his biographer states, "he had become dissatisfied with the lack of opportunities for Jews in Germany." With his brothers, he had founded the well-known banking firm of Seligman Brothers in New York. Although they had arrived as penniless immigrants, the Seligmans were well-educated and cultured men and could hardly be regarded as *nouveau riche*. Henry Ward Beecher, who had summered with the Seligmans for several seasons prior to 1877, said that they had "behaved in a manner that ought to put to shame many Christian ladies and gentlemen." During one of the darkest hours of the Civil War, Joseph Seligman had undertaken, at his own suggestion, to dispose of a large government

bond issue in Europe. The historian William E. Dodd has characterized the successful fulfillment of this mission as scarcely less important to the Union cause than the Battle of Gettysburg. Largely in recognition of these services, Seligman had been offered the post of Secretary of the Treasury by President Grant.

In 1877 the Grand Union Hotel was owned by Judge Hilton, a prominent New York politician, and A. T. Stewart, the well-known New York merchant. Born in Ireland, Stewart had arrived in America as penniless as the Seligmans and, like them, had risen to a position of great wealth and prominence. A notice in the *Dictionary of American Biography* points out that Stewart was notoriously penurious, a shrewd, harsh disciplinarian whose wage policies had once aroused widespread criticism. Legend has it that the coffin containing his remains was stolen and held for ransom by persons who had resented his dictatorial manner. Clearly personifying the new forces that had come to dominate the American scene after the Civil War, it was Stewart, not the Seligmans, who belonged in the *nouveau riche* category. The locale of the incident is, also, important. The Grand Union Hotel epitomized the parvenu splendor of the gilded age. Through its luxurious grounds strolled the "millionaires" who had emerged with such abundance in the postwar period.

On June 24, 1877, Henry Ward Beecher preached a famous sermon on the Saratoga Springs incident at Plymouth Church. "What have the Jews," he said, "of which they need be ashamed, in a Christian Republic where all men are declared to be free and equal? . . . Is it that they are excessively industrious? Let the Yankee cast the first stone. Is it that they are inordinately keen in bargaining? Have they ever stolen ten millions of dollars at a pinch from a city? Are our courts

bailing out Jews, or compromising with Jews? Are there Jews lying in our jails, and waiting for mercy, and dispossessing themselves slowly of the enormous wealth which they have stolen? You cannot find one criminal Jew in the whole catalogue. It is said that the Jews are crafty and cunning, and sometimes dishonest in their dealings. Ah! What a phenomenon dishonesty must be in New York! Do they not pay their debts when it is inconvenient? Hear it, O ye Yankees!"

Urging the Seligmans to be patient "under this slight breath, this white frost, this momentary flash of insult," Beecher said that the incident was as the bite of a mosquito to a man in his whole armor. The sermon ended on the note that there should be "no public assemblies called, no resolutions passed, no more unfortunate letters written, no recriminations, no personalities."

Was this incident, as Beecher thought, merely a slight breath, a white frost, a momentary flash of anti-Semitism? A mosquito is truly an insignificant insect, but it may be a carrier of malaria.

A decade after the incident occurred, Alice Hyneman Rhine wrote an interesting article for *The Forum* (July, 1887) on "Race Prejudice at Summer Resorts." In the course of this article, she said (my emphasis): "This prejudice, in its outward expression at least, is a new feature in the New World. Only within the present decade has there been an anti-Jewish sentiment openly displayed in the United States." From Saratoga Springs, Miss Rhine found that the practice of excluding Jews had spread throughout the Catskills and Adirondacks and that, within a decade, the practice had become so well established that it no longer aroused comment.

Surprised that the practice should have spread so quickly, Miss Rhine interviewed a number of resort owners. "Jews swarm

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everywhere," she was told; "they are lacking in refinement"—in the gilded age!—"as shown by the prominence of patent leather boots, showy trousers, and the conspicuousness and vulgarity of their jewelry"—shades of Diamond Jim Brady! Charging that Jews monopolized the best accommodations, the resort owners in the same breath complained that they were "close and penurious." Unlike some later-day observers, Miss Rhine thought that the emergence of a pattern of social prejudice at summer resorts was neither trivial nor insignificant. It was precisely at fashionable summer resorts, in her view, that a latent prejudice was most likely to find expression.

No one seems to have noticed that the Saratoga Springs incident had an interesting sequel. Jesse Seligman, one of the brothers, had been a founder of the Union League Club of New York and at one time its vice-president. But he resigned from the club in 1893 when his son was blackballed for membership because he was a Jew. Apparently anti-Semitism was unknown or of little force when the Union League Club was formed. But it is equally apparent that something had happened to change the social climate in New York between the Civil War and 1893. Henry Ward Beecher's "white frost" had, it would seem, turned into a hard freeze.

II

What Charles Beard has called "the second American Revolution"—the revolution that assured the triumph of the business enterprise—had been fought and largely won by 1877. "In 1865," writes Matthew Josephson (*The Politicos*, 1939), "three-quarters of the American people set to work instinctively, planlessly, to build a heavy industry where there had been almost nothing of the sort, and to

produce twice as much goods, food, and wealth of all kinds, as they had produced in 1860." In four great lines of endeavor—manufacturing, extractive industries, transportation, and finance—business marched from one swift triumph to another. In 1860 about a billion dollars was invested in manufacturing plants which employed 1,500,000 workers; but, in less than fifty years, the investment had risen to twelve billions and the number of workers to 5,500,000. The output of American iron and steel—true measures of industrial power—had been far below the tonnage of England and France in 1870; but, within twenty years, the United States had outdistanced both nations. Even in retrospect, it is difficult to measure the swiftness and the magnitude of the transformation which the second American Revolution worked in American life.

The year 1877 was of decisive importance in determining the fate of this revolution. A bloody and riotous year, violence was everywhere evident in the America of 1877. The great railroad strike of that year was the first significant industrial clash in American society. "Class hatred," writes Denis Tilden Lynch in *The Wild Seventies* (1941), "was a new note in American life where all men were equal before the law." The South was in the turmoil of Reconstruction; sand-lot rioters ruled in San Francisco; and a hundred thousand strikers and four million unemployed surged in the streets of northern cities. At a cabinet meeting on July 22, 1877, the suggestion was advanced that a number of states should be placed under martial law. For a moment, the issue seemed to hang in the balance; but after 1877 it became quite clear that the industrial bourgeoisie had triumphed. With society being transformed by processes which the people did not understand and by forces which they could scarcely iden-

tify, American public opinion seemed aloof, vague, indecisive, suffering from war weariness and exhaustion.

Once triumphant, the industrial tycoons discovered that they could not function within the framework of the social and political ideals of the early Republic. To insure their triumph, a new social order had to be established; a new set of institutions had to be created of which the modern corporation was, perhaps, the most important; and a new ordering of social relationships had to be effected. "In the swift transformation of the whole economic order," writes Beard, "the very texture of American society had been recast." A new hierarchy of social, economic, and political command was imposed on American society, and with this hierarchy came a new set of status relationships. "The locomotive," wrote E. L. Godkin, "is coming in contact with the framework of our institutions." With the industrial machine, came the political machine. Dating from 1870, the "boss system" had become so thoroughly entrenched in American politics by 1877 that public life was everywhere discredited by the conduct of high officials (*The New Nation* by Frederic L. Paxson, 1927, p. 72). Men began to question the value of democracy as they saw the robber-barons ride rough-shod over the rights of the people and as they witnessed an almost universal corruption of the ballot. This questioning led, in many cases, to an eventual repudiation of the earlier American ideals and traditions.

As the revolution swept forward, it uprooted the earlier democratic cultural pattern with the ruthlessness of a tornado. The simplicity of taste which had characterized the "classic" years of the early Republic gave way to a wild, garish, and irresponsible eclecticism. "The emergence of the millionaire," writes Talbot Hamlin, "was as fatal to the artistic ideals of

the Greek Revival as were the speed, the speculation and the exploitation that produced him." In one field after another, the wealth of the new millionaires was used to corrupt the tastes, the standards, and the traditions of the American people.

"It was in the seventies," wrote Partridge, "that good taste reached its lowest ebb. . . . A veritable *débacle* of the arts was in process . . . and that *débacle* was an expression of profound changes taking place at the bases of society." Godkin applied the term "chromo civilization" to the works of a generation dwelling between two worlds, the one dead, the other seeming powerless to be born. "The dignified culture of the eighteenth century, that hitherto had been a conserving and creative influence throughout the Jeffersonian revolution, was at last breaking up. Disruptive forces . . . were destroying that earlier culture and providing no adequate substitute . . . and until another culture could impose its standards upon society and re-establish an inner spiritual unity, there would be only the welter of an unlovely transition" (*The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America*, Vol. III, p. 48).

In the two decades prior to the Civil War, Emerson, Whitman, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Melville, and Lincoln—to mention only the giants—had richly fulfilled the promise of the earlier democratic culture. But their spirit did not carry over into the years of the second American Revolution when Big Business occupied the country like an alien armed force. While a new culture started to grow in these years, its promise was never realized. Peirce, Shaler, Marsh, Gibbs, Ryder, Roebling, Eakins, Richardson, Sullivan, Adams, and LaFarge, as Lewis Mumford has written, are names that any age might proudly exhibit; but "the procession of American civilization divided and walked around these men," much as it divided

or walked around the earlier tradition and culture upon which their work was based. The tragedy of the artist in these years consisted in his deep-rooted hostility to the society ushered into being by the rise of the industrial bourgeoisie who had succeeded in vulgarizing and intimidating American culture. Something of the "drought and famine" of which most of the artists of the period complained must have been sensed and experienced by wide elements in the population. For the new industrial culture was neither satisfying nor meaningful; it lacked sustenance.

The nature of the cultural transformation that accompanied the second American Revolution has never been more graphically described than in a passage from Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (emphasis added): "The wave of revulsion," he wrote, "seems to have received its initial impulse in the psychologically disintegrating effects of the Civil War. Habituation to war entails a body of predatory habits of thought, whereby clannishness in some measure replaces the sense of solidarity, and a sense of invidious distinction supplants the impulse to equitable, everyday serviceability. As an outcome of the cumulative action of these factors, the generation which follows a season of war is apt to witness a *rehabilitation* of elements of status both in its social life and in its scheme of devout observances and other symbolic and ceremonial forms. Throughout the eighties, and less plainly traceable in the seventies, also, there was perceptible a gradually advancing wave of sentiment favoring quasi-predatory business habits, *insistence on status*, anthropomorphism, and conservatism generally."

One of the ways in which this new clannishness and insistence on status expressed itself at the expense of the older solidarity was in an effort to achieve unity, out of the chaos of the times, by the nega-

tive device of opposing something—the Negroes, the Chinese, the Indians, the foreigners. For these outsiders furnished a counter-conception upon which, as Oscar Handlin has noted, "all the qualities the community feared and disliked could be ascribed and around opposition to which it could unite."

In 1879 about 177,000 immigrants had arrived in America; but by 1882 the annual influx had risen to 788,000. Faced with a growing competition for place and power, their security threatened by the forces of a rampant industrialism, the groups identifying themselves with the dominant cultural pattern sought to maintain that pattern at all costs. For it was in part through such dominance that they hoped to retain their status. After the Civil War, status lines were drawn more sharply than ever before and the struggle for status became one of the major motivations in American culture. There is, therefore, much meaning in the opening sentence of *The Magnificent Ambersons*: "Major Amberson had 'made a fortune' in 1873, when other people were losing fortunes, and the magnificence of the Ambersons began then." Feeling the pinch of the new economic dispensation, the native Americans and the older immigrant groups sought to exclude first one group and then another from identification with the dominant cultural symbols. A remarkable correlation developed between nationality and status; between race and status; and, to a lesser degree, between religion and status. In an increasingly insecure world, the maintenance of status distinctions created the illusion of security, and group differences of all kinds suddenly acquired a new meaning. In view of these tendencies—all too briefly sketched here—it is not surprising that the first overt manifestation of anti-Semitism should have occurred in the summer of 1877.

III

ment, the American people had set forth a broad and daring policy toward minori-

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IV

The tycoons that rose to power with the triumph of the second American revolution were, as Charles Beard has pointed out, largely of North European stock, mainly English and Scotch-Irish, and of Protestant background, as a roll-call will readily confirm: Gould, Vanderbilt, Huntington, Hill, Harriman, Rockefeller, Carnegie, Cooke, Morgan, Armour. Only Gould, in the characteristic phrase of Henry Adams, "showed a trace of Jewish origin." The first threat to the unchallenged dominance of these industrial tycoons came from German-Jewish immigrants in the United States.

At the time of the first census in 1790, there were only about 2,000 Jews in the United States in a population of approximately 2,000,000. From this figure the number increased to about 250,000 in 1880. This increase was largely made up of German-Jews who, like the Seligmans, had been discouraged by the wave of reaction which had swept over Europe in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. Swept immediately into the current of westward expansion, the German-Jews were carried far from the ports of entry. In the rapidly growing communities of the Middle West, the Far West, and the South, many of these immigrants made the transition from peddler to prosperous merchant with extraordinary swiftness. In such cities as Cincinnati, Chicago, Louisville, St. Paul, Dallas, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, German-Jews were accorded a high status based upon priority of settlement—they were among the "first families"—and the wealth and distinction which they had achieved. The mention of such names as Straus, Rosenwald, Seligman, Warburg, Schiff, Morgenthau, Sloss, Sutro, and Lubin is alone sufficient to indicate this amazing upward mobility.

That the first overt manifestation of

anti-Semitism in the United States took place in 1877 is to be explained in terms of the corrosion which the industrial revolution had brought about in the American scheme of values and the revolutionary democratic culture and its traditions. But that this initial act should have taken place in the upper reaches of society and that it should have assumed the form of social discrimination is to be explained by the rapid rise of German-Jews in the new social and economic hierarchy. As prosperous and successful merchants, bankers, and traders, the German-Jews could not be altogether excluded from the civic and social life of the communities in which they had settled; but they could be made to feel a subtle sense of rejection, and limitations could be imposed against their further encroachment on the citadels of power. The erection of these invisible barriers at the top levels of society was largely prompted by the feeling that, at this level, they were to be regarded as serious competitors for place and power. While the non-Jewish tycoons were prone to war among themselves, they were quick to protect their social power and dominant position in American industry by the exclusion of these agile newcomers. In the period from 1840 to 1880, when the bulk of the German-Jews arrived, some 10,189,429 immigrants entered the United States. Lost in this avalanche of peoples, the German-Jews were numerically insignificant and aroused almost nothing in the way of popular antagonism or hostility. It was only in the upper reaches of society that their remarkable success excited feelings of envy and disdain.

Social discrimination always lays the foundation for subsequent discriminations of a more significant character, first, in the sense that it has a tendency to check the process of assimilation and to emphasize differences; and, second, in the sense that it forces the minority to de-

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velop its own social institutions. Once the latter development has taken place, the minority feels that it has insulated itself against discrimination and thereafter regards the uneasy equilibrium thus established as a permanent and satisfactory adjustment which is never the case. Had the German-Jews not met with systematic social discrimination, integration for all Jews in America would have been much easier. Once having acquiesced in the pattern of social discrimination, the spokesmen for American Jewry were thereafter blinded to those aspects of Jewish experience in America that did not square with their thesis that the battle against anti-Semitism had been won in the United States.

It was precisely the capacity of the German-Jews for assimilation that most distressed their upper-class rivals. Hoffman Nickerson in his book on *The American Rich* (1930) points out that the upper classes in this country had forced the Jew to renounce "his hope of concealing his separateness in order to rise to power within non-Jewish societies, half unseen by those among whom he moves." It was the American rich who checked this tendency. "Had the American rich accepted social relations and intermarriage with the Jews to the same extent as the French or the British rich, the comparative looseness and fluidity of our social structure might well have bogged us down badly in the hopeless blind alley of assimilationism"! Fortunately, from Nickerson's point of view, we had "no classes of poor nobles or gentlefolk open to the temptation of marriage with rich Jews and able on their side to obtain a measure of social recognition for their Jewish partners." The American rich had raised the social bars just in time so that "the larger organism might continue its life without harmful disturbances." This was much the same view as that expressed by Hilaire Belloc (*The*

Jews, 1922, pp. 201-203). There had been no trace of anti-Semitism in the United States, according to Belloc, through the early and middle 19th century. When it did arise, it took the form of "a certain social prejudice among the wealthier classes in the East."

Thus when the doors of the Grand Union were slammed in the face of Joseph Seligman, an important precedent had been established. And it is not without significance that this precedent was established along with other precedents of a similar nature involving Indians, Negroes, and Orientals, all as part of a new status system which arose in America in the latter part of the last century. Passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 led directly to the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924 which was aimed at the virtual exclusion of further Jewish immigration. When correlated with other phases of the minority problems which began to loom large after 1876, it is, indeed, apparent that the Saratoga Springs incident was not a slight breath, a white frost, a momentary flash of insult. For, once the pattern of social discrimination and exclusion had been established against Jews, the way was cleared for later anti-Semitic manifestations of a far more serious character.

Carey McWilliams, one of the chief authorities in the United States on America's "minority" groups, is a familiar contributor to *COMMON GROUND*. This chapter and one to appear in the Autumn issue of CG, "From Little Acorns," trace the developing pattern of anti-Semitism in the United States: "first social discrimination, then increasing economic discrimination, and, finally, overt organized political anti-Semitism." They are part of Mr. McWilliams's important study of anti-Semitism called *The Yellow Myth*, which

Little Brown will publish in the autumn.

Envisioning the United States as the scene of the "last great struggle against anti-Semitism," Mr. McWilliams points out in an opening chapter to the volume: "The pivotal position that America now occupies should alone dictate the wisdom of undertaking a thoughtful, sober, and careful scrutiny of the problem of anti-Semitism in the United States. As part of this scrutiny, we need to find the answers to a number of questions. Is it true that anti-Semitism lacks deep roots in American life? Deep is a relative term; how deep? what kind of roots? are these roots withering or sending out new shoots? Again, we are told that anti-Semitism is a disease; but what kind of disease? with what symptoms? Why is it that this disease should be regarded, by many of its

victims, as essentially incurable? What is there about anti-Semitism that has prompted its characterization as one of the decisive problems of Western civilization?

"These are very large questions, indeed, and I do not suggest that satisfactory answers will be found in the following pages. What I have attempted to do is to trace the pattern of anti-Semitism in the United States; to examine as closely as possible the theory that anti-Semitism is without real roots in American life; to raise certain basic questions about the nature of the disease of anti-Semitism and to suggest how this disease can be most effectively combatted."

In his probing of these questions COMMON GROUND readers will follow Mr. McWilliams with close interest.

FOR EQUALITY IN NATURALIZATION

RICHARD J. WALSH

NOW THAT Nazi Germany is gone, the United States is the only large country in the world that treats persons of certain "races" as unfit to become its citizens. This racial discrimination runs only against certain Asiatic and Pacific peoples. Not only is it morally wrong, but it holds future danger for our nation at a time when the "Asiatic Century" has begun.

Roger Baldwin, on the eve of his recent trip to the Orient, representing the American Civil Liberties Union and other organizations, said, "If we talk democracy to the Far East, the Far West had better begin practicing it." Equality in naturalization, he said, would be "tangible evi-

dence of our good faith" toward Asiatic peoples and the United Nations.

Recently in New Delhi there was held a remarkable Inter-Asian Relations Conference, on the call of Jawaharlal Nehru. Delegates and observers came from all parts of Asia, except Japan, representing half the people of the world. Indonesia, newly free, sent 28 delegates; there were 16 from the Asiatic Republics of the USSR, 4 from Tibet, 7 from Nepal, 2 from Bhutan, among the total of 250. In his inaugural speech Nehru said, "For too long we of Asia have been petitioners in western courts and chancelleries. That story must belong to the past. The countries of Asia can no longer be used as pawns

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by others." An American observer reported, "Delegate after delegate struck that note—that here were Asiatic peoples gathered together to discuss their own problems instead of having them discussed and settled for them in London, Paris or Washington. Delegates who attended got out of the conference a feeling of pride and power in the new world dawning in that hemisphere. For the first time in their lives they held their heads high as Asiatics and had the great spiritual satisfaction of meeting together as free peoples."

In their propaganda among the Asiatic peoples, the Communists continually point to the racial attitudes of the United States in contrast with the practice in the Soviet Union, where, as the Stalin Constitution provides, any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred or contempt is punishable by law.

How can the United States be so blind as not to see what all this means? At a time when the sincerity of our country is being put to test on many fronts, and especially when the peoples of all Asia are deeply distrustful of us, we shall be wise to get rid once for all of the onus of discrimination against Asiatic and Pacific peoples.

"Oriental exclusion" is a term with wider meaning than is commonly understood. It grows out of the restrictions which we began to put on immigration in 1917 and strengthened by the Immigration Act of 1924, often called the "Oriental Exclusion Act." But interwoven with the immigration laws are those applying to naturalization. We not only exclude certain Asiatics in that we do not let them come here to live, but we also exclude from many occupations and from many natural human rights great numbers of Asiatic residents who came here legally before there were any such bars to immigration. These persons, most of

whom have been here for a quarter of a century, and many for half a century, are being treated most unjustly. We allowed them to come in, but we still do not let them live on an equal basis with us, simply because we refuse to let them become naturalized.

The history of naturalization in this country is curious and inconsistent. For the first eighty years of our life as a nation only "free white persons" could be citizens. After the Civil War, those of African birth or descent were made eligible. Gradually, starting in 1900, equality was granted to Hawaiians, Puerto Ricans, Virgin Islanders, native-born American Indians, and then, in 1940, under the good neighbor policy, to all races indigenous to the Western Hemisphere. This left us with a sweeping discrimination against Asiatics only. Bad conscience in wartime led to the removal of most of the bars against peoples who were our allies—the Chinese in 1943 and the Filipinos and East Indians in 1946. We are now in the ungraceful and inconsistent position of regarding as ineligible only the peoples of certain areas lying within a strange rectangle of prejudice that covers parts of Asia and the Pacific.

To one born in the United States, of parents who are citizens, naturalization may seem largely a matter of sentiment. To the alien, it is intensely practical, possibly even a matter of survival. Dillon S. Myer, in an official report of the War Relocation Authority issued February 6, 1947, said, "There are a great many reasons why this purely racial restriction should be removed from our naturalization laws. But perhaps the most important is that it has been used by racist elements in various Western States as the basis for discriminatory legislation which severely hampers thousands of people from making a living. The so-called 'alien land laws,' for example, are nearly all

COMMON GROUND

phrased so that their provisions apply to 'aliens ineligible for naturalization.' This formula, sharply delimiting the economic opportunities of Japanese and other oriental aliens while staying within the allowable limits of the Constitution, was discovered over 30 years ago by U. S. Webb, the then Attorney General of California and his close associate, Francis J. Heney, co-author with Webb of the first alien land law. Devised originally by two able legal practitioners and rabid anti-orientalists, it has stood the test of time and court decisions and still prevents the Japanese in the West Coast states and some of the inland Western states from owning or leasing farm land and—in some cases—even from sharing in its profits. Thus in these particular states, the Japanese alien, whose whole background and training may be agricultural, is prevented from engaging in farming except as a paid laborer, despite the fact that he may have had sons in the American armed forces who have given up their lives for their country.

"WRA believes that this situation is wholly indefensible and recommends the passage of legislation which would extend the privilege of naturalization equally to members of all the races of the world."

There are about 500 laws passed by one state or another which restrict certain occupations to citizens or persons who have at least filed their first papers. If you are a Korean you cannot be a chauffeur in New York. If you are an Indonesian you cannot be an architect in Ohio. If you are a Siamese you cannot own land in California. If you are an Afghan, a Malayan, a Samoan, a Chamorro, a Tahitian, you will find ninety-three vocations entirely closed to you in one or another of the United States. New York alone has forty-seven specific bars against the employment of persons who are not citizens. In 28 states only a citizen can be

a physician; in 26, only a citizen can be a lawyer; in 15, only a citizen can be a certified public accountant. "In addition to state rulings against aliens," says a pamphlet of the National Committee on Immigration Policy, "there exists a vast array of municipal regulations passed by individual cities, which prohibit the entry of aliens into specific occupations. Federal jobs are also largely closed to aliens, and citizenship is required for public office."

Few would argue against keeping aliens out of certain kinds of positions. The injustice lies in the fact that only persons of certain "races" are denied the right to change their status to that of citizens, no matter how long they have been here, how much they have been "Americanized," how useful and loyal they have been.

The latest official figures, those of June 30, 1943, showed that there were in the United States and its territories 96,485 persons who were "ineligible to citizenship." This total was made up as follows:

Afghans	191
Malayans	274
Siamese	178
Koreans	3,521
British Pacific Islanders	247
French Pacific Islanders	116
Japanese	90,521
Guamians	288
Javanese	283
Sumatrans	111
Netherlands Indians	170
Total	96,485

Here we face the fact that discrimination bears most heavily upon those born in Japan, who make up about nine-tenths of the "Oriental aliens" living in the United States.

Most of these Japanese are classed as permanent residents, having entered the

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United States legally before the Oriental Exclusion Act was passed in 1924. Somewhat less than 2,000 entered as treaty merchants, students, visitors, and in other categories permitted by law.

They have been good and valuable residents. Their work and their ideas have gone into the building of the strength and beauty of the nation. No immigrant group, man for man and family for family, excels them in industry, dignity, and loyalty. The Army and Navy Intelligence and the FBI testify that not one act of espionage or sabotage was committed by residents of Japanese ancestry in the United States, including Hawaii, before, during, or after the Pearl Harbor attack. Many of these Japanese helped to defeat the country of their birth through their efforts in counter-intelligence, map drawing, interpreting, translating, and teaching American soldiers.

And they sent their American-born sons to war. As General Stilwell said, the Japanese American troops "bought an awful big hunk of America with their blood." No unit in the history of war ever received so many decorations as the famous 442nd Regimental Combat Team of Japanese Americans that fought in Italy and France. Dangerous tasks of military intelligence in the Pacific—doubly dangerous for an American with Japanese features—performed by sons of these "enemy aliens," shortened the war and saved many American lives.

These veterans think their many medals of little use unless their parents can be freed from the oppression of race prejudice. The alien mother of a private who was killed and who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor cannot receive an old-age pension from her state. In case after case the "alien land laws" of the West Coast states bear down hard on veterans and their families.

Mike Masaoka, of the Japanese Ameri-

can Citizens League, a stout American if there ever was one, says, "My mother, who had five sons who fought overseas in Europe, with one son killed and three others receiving the Purple Heart among some 30-odd decorations and ribbons, isn't sure that she can lease property for commercial or residential purposes, because even this right to earn a living or to have a home is contested in California.

"The only son of a Japanese alien volunteered for combat duty with our armed forces. He was killed in action. His father cannot receive his son's parcel of land, even though his son specifically gave it to him in a battlefield will, because he is 'ineligible to citizenship.'

"Ex-Army Private Kazuo Hiyama, who became sole owner of his farm in Fowler after his co-owner brother was killed in Italy, returned to find that his lands had been escheated by the State.

"Akira Iwamura of Selma and his brother Cecil—the former saw service in the island-hopping campaigns in the Pacific and the latter is a Purple Heart veteran of the 442nd—had to borrow \$20,625 to buy back their own lands from California.

"Miss Tomoye Fujita, who had a brother in the Military Intelligence forces in the Pacific, worked for the federal government during the war in the Foreign Language Broadcast Intelligence Service. She returned to her home recently in Sanger only to find that it now belonged to the State, not to her.

"Then there is Mrs. Roy K. Hirata, American-born citizen mother of three American-born children, who is married to a Japanese alien. Because she permitted her husband to help her cultivate her land, to rear her children, to live with her, the State claims that a crime has been committed and has filed an escheat to confiscate her lands without compensation of any kind.

"Many Japanese American farmers, veterans of combat and intelligence duties, cannot get crop and seed loans from the government or private agencies because our titles to our farm lands are in question."

There are special twists in the laws. Take the case of Taro Yashima, artist and author of *The New Sun* and *Horizon Is Calling*. He entered the United States in 1940 on temporary status as a refugee from the Japanese militarists, who had thrown him into prison. He served during the war first with the Office of War Information and later with the Office of Strategic Services. Yet, according to that excellent newspaper, *The Pacific Citizen*, "because he is an alien of Japanese ancestry who has come to the United States since the passage of the Exclusion Act of 1924, he is considered ineligible for permanent residence and has been served with a deportation order. Despite the fact that Yashima made a valuable contribution to American victory in the war, the Attorney General under the law has no discretionary powers to stay deportation and the only remedy lies in the passage of a private bill by Congress."

For contrast between the stern law and the generous liberalism of civilian Americans, the same newspaper reminds us that Yasuo Kuniyoshi, who was born in Japan but who came here before 1924 and is today an outstanding exponent of American art, was honored by his fellow artists when he was named temporary president of the Artists Equity Association. But he still cannot become a citizen.

It is well known that the discrimination against Asiatics began on the Pacific Coast, early in the present century. But no part of the United States can wholly escape the blame. The people of California have perhaps been forced to bear more than their share of it. Professor Elmer R. Smith writes in the proceedings

of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters: "It is safe to say that the 'white population' of the region has inherited a distinct color prejudice from the earlier settlers who found the territory settled by 'colored persons' of Indian and Mexican ancestry, and who also brought with them a definite set of mores from the southern part of the United States relative to all non-whites. This 'color prejudice' background became associated with and reinforced by the experience of 'coolie' labor from the Orient, and when any group other than their own 'white' aristocracy came into direct competition with their economic empire, bigotry, intolerance, and discrimination in social, legal, and economic fields were resorted to for the purpose of holding the non-white group in its place." Thus the attitudes not only of the South, but of the Middle West, inherited from the period when it was said that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian," have played their evil part.

Resolved to wipe the last blot of such prejudice from the books, a large number of well-known American citizens have recently formed a Committee for Equality in Naturalization (299 Madison Avenue, New York 17). They will press for legislation that will declare that the right to become a naturalized citizen shall not be limited by race or national origin, will repeal the exclusion clauses in previous laws, and will set up annual immigration quotas.

Immigration is admittedly a more controversial question than naturalization. The only sane position, of course, is that taken by Earl G. Harrison, former Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization, that entrance into the United States should be allowed on the personal qualifications of the individual, without regard to the place of his birth. The record will

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not be clean until we repeal every "racial" reference in the immigration laws. There are sharp injustices. For example, the G.I. Brides Act, passed by Congress in 1945, does not cover any woman of Japanese "race" with whom an American soldier has been so unfortunate as to fall in love and marry—even though the bride might be a citizen of Canada, as has happened. Soldiers who have married Japanese girls cannot bring them home unless private bills in their behalf are passed by Congress. But the number of individuals affected by the ban on immigration is not great, because the annual quotas that would be fixed, under the system in the Immigration Act of 1924 that applies to all countries, would be very small: in the case of Korea, 100 per year; in the case of Japan not more than 158 per year. If there were no Asiatic exclusion, the total increase in immigration quotas would be less than 1,000 per year.

Several bills affecting Asiatic immigration, deportation, and naturalization are now before committees of Congress. One introduced by Delegate Joseph Farrington of Hawaii would provide that "The right to become a naturalized citizen shall not be limited by race or national origin," would repeal the sections in previous acts that exclude "natives of certain Pacific Islands and of a portion of the continent of Asia," and would authorize annual quotas for them, computed under Section 11 of the Immigration Act of 1924. Delegate Farrington has also introduced another bill, specifically for the benefit of Koreans, that would admit 100 Koreans per year and make Korean residents eligible for citizenship.

But because of traditional objection to opening up immigration it may be necessary to move forward one step at a time. The first step obviously ought to

be to permit the naturalization of those Asiatics who have so long lived among us. Therefore, there is soon to be introduced a bill which would simply provide that persons who lawfully entered the United States before January 1, 1925—that is, before the Exclusion Act of 1924 went into effect—can become United States citizens. Once Congress gets to work on such a bill, it may see the logic and the wisdom of going the short remaining distance to the final repeal of all Asiatic exclusion.

The movement in this direction is beginning to get impressive support. The list of members of the Committee for Equality in Naturalization includes the names of citizens of the highest distinction and influence, many of them on the Pacific Coast. In Hawaii a large fund is being raised to aid the campaign—the contributions coming largely from Japanese Americans, "in a common effort to obtain citizenship for our parents." Several American Legion Posts on the Pacific Coast, many groups in the American Veterans Committee, and at least one council of the Veterans of Foreign Wars are already on record in favor of citizenship for Japanese. In a poll taken last year by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Denver, twice as many of those questioned thought that the Japanese here should be granted the privilege of citizenship, as those who did not.

As usual, the people of the United States are instinctively right. As usual, law-making lags behind.

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PRIEST ON A WHITE HORSE

ISABEL CURRIER

FATHER O'NEIL was pastor of the Holy Family Church in Gorham, New Hampshire, when I climbed onto his knees—not down onto my own—to make my first confession in advance of my First Communion.

To this day I say with certainty that Father O'Neil bore a closer resemblance to Santa Claus than any man I have ever met, despite the arguments of my mother to the contrary, who claims to remember Father more vividly than I do—having been older than I at the time.

"He came to visit us Glen Street parishioners every Saturday between afternoon and evening confessions," I say tentatively.

"That's right," Mother agrees. "He had a special day for each section of the town and Saturday was Glen Street day."

"He came on horseback, wearing a tall hat and a frock coat, and the horse, a prancing white one, was called Prince."

"Half right and half wrong," Mother argues. "Prince was snow white and as venerable as the good Father himself. But the prance had gone out of Prince years ago. The pair of them—Father O'Neil and his Prince—paced through the town at such a gait that even the lame and bow-legged old tinker, Mr. Benjamin Bass, could beat them down Main Street. There were those," Mother adds darkly, "who tittered a lot at the sight; those of our own who thought we should have had a young priest now that Father Emerson was dead; and those others who thought a priest in the town was but to be laughed

at anyway. But Father O'Neil was a fine figure of a man—what we'd call a gentleman of the old school."

"He looked like Santa Claus. . . ."

"He did not! He was neither roly-poly nor bearded, was Father O'Neil. He had just enough stomach to sit his horse with dignity, and his kind old face was smooth as the top of his head. Nor was he what you'd call a twinkling man, as any Santa Claus I've ever heard about is supposed to be. No Santa Claus-ish bouncing to Father O'Neil, but old world courtesy! A vain man would have concealed his baldness, being a priest and able to do so. But Father took any excuse—including a small female like yourself—to flourish his topper at arm's length; an elegant gesture for a man on horseback. It would have been dashing if Prince had been able to move faster."

Well, all *right*, Mother, but here's what I do remember rightly and it concerns mostly me. . . .

Prince crept up Glen Street each Saturday afternoon at what might have been a totter to a horse with less pride in himself and the distinguished citizen he bore. Prince stopped of his own accord in front of old Mrs. Monaghan's house and stood unhitched while Father took her a sack of Canadian peppermints to ease her throat after spells of coughing. When the priest had remounted, Prince came of his own accord to the only other Catholic home on the street, which was ours.

My sister and I would be out watching

for him. We were specially fond of him because he treated all children as if they were people to be respected, not as if they were small creatures to be paraded or ignored as suited the mood of bigger creatures. There was considerable materialism in our watching for Father O'Neil, too. "Plain as an old shoe, he was," Mother says, "never using the front door but coming in through the kitchen like one of the family."

As he passed through the kitchen, Father O'Neil placed two nickels on diagonal corners of the table which, later, he would tell my sister and me to get for ourselves. The nickels were generally fishscales (old-style Canadian five-cent pieces, smaller and thinner than a dime). In those days, the currency of Canada, sixty miles distant, was as acceptable below the border as our own. A nickel apiece was largesse to two small girls who otherwise had only two pennies a week, one of which was supposed to go into the collection box on Sunday. And Father O'Neil was the only dispenser of nickels in my childhood who never required an accounting of how they were spent.

My sister was an old communicant of a year's standing and took precedence at the gate in the picket fence when Father O'Neil and Prince arrived. Father flung the reins over a picket, ignoring the iron ring sunken into the corner upright of our house to accommodate visiting horses. Bursting with importance, I did the honors for the house while Father O'Neil greeted my sister. Pulling Prince's reins off the picket I led him two or three paces to the iron ring and, climbing the fence so that I could reach, undid the buckle of the reins and fastened it again to the ring. (My passion for horses was so great that, from my earliest memory, I neither walked nor ran but moved at a gallop of my own devising, mentally astride a snow-white charger like Prince.) Meanwhile

my sister would be receiving an elaborate greeting. Father O'Neil swept off his top hat, described a circle of his arm with the hat in hand, placed the brim against his heart and bowed low and separately to the two of us. "My little Irish girl!" he would call my sister, in tribute to the Hurley side of the family, which she resembled. "And, my little French girl!" His salute to me honored the national strain in my paternity.

He'd replace the topper and lend me a hand while I dismounted from the fence. Always I'd linger there, hoping that Father O'Neil would suggest my sitting in Prince's saddle for a while to keep the horse company. Now and then Father would boost both my sister and me to Prince's back in front of the saddle before mounting himself. But the ride was only to the corner of Glen Street, Father O'Neil held us on as carefully as if we were china dolls, and the occasion never was exclusively mine. The gala days for me were those when Father O'Neil, visiting the lingering deathbed of my Grandmother Herold, commissioned my sister and me to stay outside.

"Take turns minding Prince for me now!" Father O'Neil would beg us anxiously. "He's restless and worried today and I daren't leave him. But watch him closely! It's a spirited and unexpected beast he is!"

My sister was in terror of all creatures, including dogs and cats, so I easily bullied her into letting me do all the minding of Prince. I'd climb to his back from the fence and, although he wouldn't move an inch, I'd cling to his mane and ride fabulous imaginary miles. Those private trysts with Prince ended when Grandmother Herold died. I rode in a high carriage at her funeral, wondering how tears could be running down my father's cheeks on so grand an occasion. (My Grandmother Herold was his adopted grand-

mother. No flesh nor blood to us, she had been kind to him when he was a motherless boy, and he returned the compliment in her old age, because, as she used to tell us, "I'm an orphan, too!")

There was always a moment during Father O'Neil's visits when we'd be summoned into the living room with the Round Oak stove to have a bite while he had a cup of tea ("and mind your manners in front of the priest!").

Many a time he caught me bolting a cookie or a piece of cake when I thought no one was looking. Gazing solemnly my way he would pop the whole of his own cookie or cake into his mouth at once, so cleverly that my mother never suspected his manners were no better than mine. ("Hush!" my mother said sharply the time Kate Monaghan—God rest her soul!—remarked: "Sometimes I think the priest gets along with the young ones because he's their age for the second time himself!")

Being the youngest, I'd sit on Father O'Neil's lap or the arm of his chair to show off how well I knew my Catechism. My sister's prestige as an old communicant hadn't nearly the privilege attached to it that a candidate had. I was only six when I made my First Communion because I was precocious. That is another way of saying that when my sister was taught to read at the age of five I, two years younger, was noways inclined by nature to be left out of anything. Therefore, I learned to read at the age of three and learned my Catechism along with her. I could spout Shakespeare for Children and recitations from the Second and Third Readers as well as my Catechism. (In secret I also had an unholy acquaintanceship with dime novels: "*Then die like the dog that you are,*" cried Leadville Lou and, turning, he plunged his bowie knife straight into the bad man's heart!")

"Precocious indeed!" my mother ex-

claims. "A fine-sounding word to bestow on a hellion, if ever one lived!"

The time for collecting our nickels came every Saturday with Father O'Neil's departure.

"The two of you see what the fairies have left on the kitchen table for you," he'd tell us. The moment he'd saluted us grandly, top hat at arm's length, from the weary old Prince's back, we'd hotfoot it to Libby's Store and spend our nickels separately, and separately lick our ice cream cones or pickled limes. If it be that one bought peanuts and the other chocolate men, we'd share and share alike. But mostly my sister and I were rivals and not sharers.

My day of disaster came on a Sunday with sudden spring and I, brooding because it was marble weather and I had no marbles, bemoaned my own folly for having spent Father O'Neil's nickel the day before on gluttonous indulgence. I made a tour to the beechnut grove, where, as all children on Glen Street knew, young lovers of the town went and sprawled no matter what the weather so that change fell out of young men's pockets for us youngsters to find later. But nary a gleam of silver or copper caught my eye in the slushy stillness of the beechnut grove and I returned home, disgruntled that the First Communicants' Catechism class was looming and it was marble-playing weather.

Entering our house through the kitchen, I spied a Canadian fishscale on the corner of the table. I grabbed it without hesitation; it would buy marbles and I would skip Catechism. On the diagonal corner was another nickel. I gathered that up too, then hypocritically raised my voice: "Mama, where are you? Where's everybody?"

In the living room my parents and sister sat with Father O'Neil, although he'd been there on his regular call the day before. He sat close to the Round Oak

stove (a Dowagiac, it was, with the most commanding of Indians atop it!), with his pudgy hands spread above his knees. He got up to greet me (bless the courteous old heart of him), child that I was, and bowed with his hand on his heart: "I came specially to see my little French girl today and she was not to be seen."

I went straight to climb on his knees and bury my face in the coat that always smelled beatifically (to me) of Prince.

"We were talking about how well you know your Catechism," Father O'Neil said, "and we were wondering could you



explain it as well as recite it. What is the Sacrament of Penance?"

"Penance is a Sacrament through which we confess our sins to God through a duly authorized priest for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness," I parroted, my mind on the two nickels, hid thievinly inside my ferris waist.

"What does it mean?" Father O'Neil asked.

"It means," I said in slow and appalling realization, "that if I tell you—because you're a priest—what I've done that's bad, you will forgive me in the Name of God."

"Ahhhhh!" Father O'Neil heaved a deep sigh and shifted me to the crook of his arm. "But is forgiveness all that is in the Sacrament?"

"I have to want and to promise to sin no more," I said miserably.

"Bless my soul!" Father O'Neil kissed my cheek suddenly and as suddenly set me on my feet. "Go with your sister now and see what's on the kitchen table for you."

Cravenly I hung back and waited for my sister's shout: "Oh, Father! Mama, Daddy! There isn't anything on the kitchen table!"

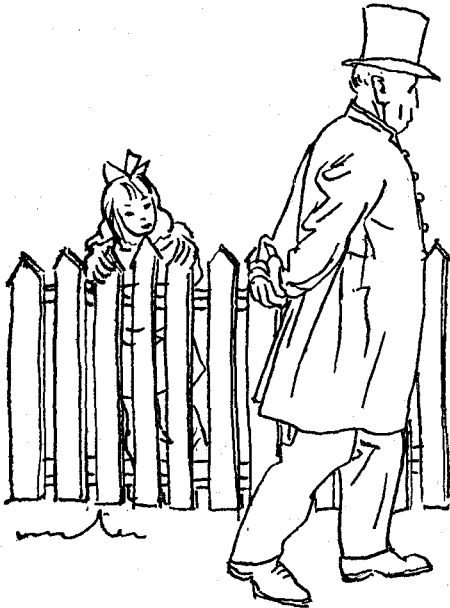
Father O'Neil was on his feet beside me in a moment. "Bless my soul!" he said softly, as if it were a secret. "I'm getting so absent-minded I never know what I do any more. I thought I saw nickels on the kitchen table as I came in, but I couldn't have seen them." He fished into his trouser pocket and brought out a great handful of silver. From it, he selected two fishscales and tendered one to me. "For my little French girl!" I hesitated, and he turned immediately to my sister and offered it to her. She took it with a politeness that did the family proud and again he turned to me, offering me the other. I had pulled myself together and accepted it with a bow and a mumble, then fled to the shed.

After I was sure Father O'Neil had gone, I fared forth to Catechism. On the way I stopped in the drug store, purchased three pickled limes and ate them. Then I bought an ice-cream cone and ate that. I had one nickel remaining and was negotiating for the proper color of marbles when my sister came in. She didn't have to go to Catechism class, and

I hurriedly finished my selections and left. I recall that when I came home from Catechism I was sick to my stomach. I also remember that I was glad I was sick; it seemed to ease my conscience.

I have a hazy recollection of seemingly endless weeks that followed. Father O'Neil came to our house several times. He asked me my Catechism and my understanding of it in gentle tones, sometimes absently stroking my hair as he did so. There were always two nickels on the table when he bade us to go and find them, and I always spent mine recklessly.

Recklessness was, in fact, the striking quality of my personality in that period. I was cruel to my sister who, being delicate, was easy prey to my lusty strength. I became willful and saucy, perpetrating high crimes which had always been forbidden me: I played marbles with big boys of the town and on the Main Street, a thing no little girl save a hoyden would dream of doing; the dishonesty in my being crept into the marble games, for I became adept at cheating. And on two



occasions—once on Sunday!—I skipped my First Communion class to play marbles, as bold as you please, where respectable folk walking along Main Street could see my depravity. I was a horrible example of one of the religious tenets being taught me: that the soul once launched upon the downward path has the momentum of a snowball; that one sin leads to another and a completely fresh start is the only salvation.

I recall that my own looming fresh start was, however, a matter of deep and despairing dread to me. It seemed as if I wanted to get as much sinfulness as possible stacked up to divert Father O'Neil, if possible, from my sacrilegious theft of two nickels from the very confessor who would have to shrive me.

On the day of my First Confession I still had not the daring to carry out the only plan to avoid retribution that had occurred to me. I had pondered, long and feverishly, the possibility of running away. I could steal a horse from Libby's barn and, with my favorite middy blouse and a stolen cache of food as luggage, escape to a romantic gypsy life along the highways of the world outside Gorham, New Hampshire. But the dream was always diverted by realization of how comfortable I was at home; of how my profligacy with Father O'Neil's weekly nickel (and such other coins as came my way from uncles, aunts, and grandparents) would send me into the world penniless; finally, of how grief-stricken my relatives would be and of how, in their grief, they might turn accusingly to Father O'Neil, the relentless judge from whom I'd fled. In the end, it was compassion for my bereft family, forced through no fault of their own to stagger through life without my sunny presence, that made me decide not to run away but to face the music.

As youngest of the class I was first to go to the confessional. The regular con-

fessional was never used for children. Father O'Neil, as we had been told, was at his stance on one side of a grate in the sacristy.

A nun's hand on my shoulder fetched me upright from my knees in the front pew, where I had been uneasily aware of my quivering stomach and the possibility that, if I threw up the moment I reached the confessional, Father O'Neil probably would absolve me without hearing my confession before sending for the doctor. I stumbled up the steps to the sacristy, genuflected with elaborate reverence to prolong my excursion, and made a great and weighty business of opening and closing the heavy door of the sacristy. Then I beheld Father O'Neil, miles away it seemed, and facing me. His bald old head rested wearily against the side of the grating. His eyes were closed. One hand fingered a rosary. I turned, thinking to escape.

"Come here and kneel down, child," he called.

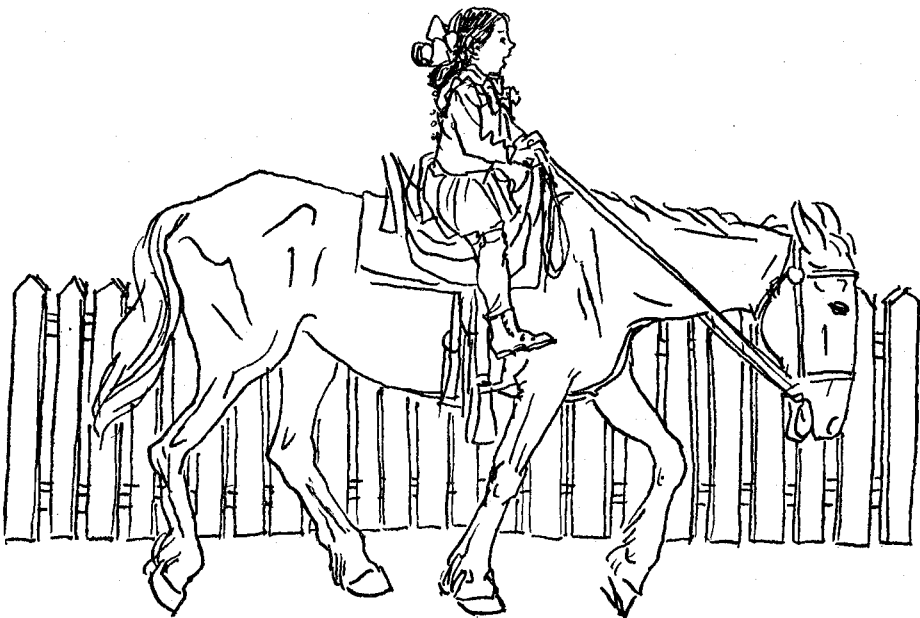
I walked the endless distance, quaking

in every muscle. Early in the journey I sobbed aloud. By the time I had completed it, I was weeping hysterically and Father O'Neil, half-risen from his chair, was saying: "Bless my soul, what has come over you? Come now, why are you crying? You've nothing to fear. Why, bless my soul, you've never been afraid of anything."

I rushed past the prie-dieu where I was supposed to kneel and fought my way onto Father O'Neil's knees. "Bless my soul!" was all that he said as he swished his stole away from my watery countenance and permitted me to sob against his soutane. Presently, he "there, there'd" me a bit and my sobs slackened.

"I know you can say the confiteor," he remarked placidly, "but why don't you say it anyway? Then you must kneel on the other side of the grate for your confession."

"I confess to Almighty God," I began, steadied by the recital. But when I untangled an arm from around Father O'Neil's neck to strike my breast, I felt



alone and lost again. In a rush of words I told him about my certainty of doom, together with the dark recital of the reasons: I had failed to keep holy the Sabbath Day; had skipped Catechism; gambled—and on Sunday; cheated—and on Sunday; had struck my sister and bedevilled her; had disobeyed and answered my parents back. The sound of my own voice in self-accusation was so reassuring I heard myself say: “I stole,” before I was aware that my transgressions against the Commandments had progressed that far.

“What did you steal?” Father O’Neil interrupted gently.

“Two nickels,” I muttered, burying my face again.

“You’ll have to give back what you stole. It isn’t enough to confess to stealing if you can give back what doesn’t belong to you. Will you promise to return the money to the person you stole it from?”

I had not anticipated any obstacle of wealth between me and absolution. In a frenzy of fear I thought Father O’Neil was telling me I could not be forgiven, could not make my First Communion, until I’d given back the nickels.

“Ohhhh,” I wailed, “I spent the money and I haven’t got any. What’ll I do, oh what’ll I do?”

“Bless my soul, don’t begin that again!” Father O’Neil set me forcibly but gently onto my feet and stood, groping at the slit in his soutane to get at his pocket beneath. “Listen to me, now. When I visit your house there is always a nickel on the table for you, isn’t there? Suppose you had the present for two weeks in advance? That would be ten cents. Would you give it back to the person from whom you stole? You’d have no present of a nickel for two weeks, mind you.”

“Oh, yes,” I said fervently. “I want to give it back. I didn’t know I’d have to. . . .”

“Do you think you could steal and be forgiven just by asking? Do you think you could keep ill-gotten goods? Did your ill-gotten goods make you happy?”

“Oh, no, the pickled limes and ice cream made me sick,” I testified.

“Here.” Father O’Neil selected a dime from the change in his pocket. “Now you can return your ill-gotten goods.”

“It wasn’t a ten-cents I stole,” I affirmed. “It was two nickels.”

“Bless my soul!” He found two fish-scales and extended them. “Here.” I held them for a period which must have been less than an hour, but it didn’t seem less. Then I handed the nickels back to Father O’Neil and lowered my head. “I stole them from you, Father,” I said.

“And why?” he asked. “Had I injured you so that you wished to injure me? If you needed pickled limes and ice cream couldn’t you have asked me—or your parents—making the need a request? Or didn’t you know you were stealing and who you stole from?”

“I didn’t when I did it.”

“Couldn’t you have come to me alone to tell me right away?”

“I was ashamed, Father.”

“Ahhhh, kneel down there now, my dear, and tell me your whole confession again to see if you’ve missed anything.”

I did so—formula and all. When I confessed to stealing, I added that I had made restitution and would never, never steal again. Father O’Neil imposed the penance upon me of saying a decade of my rosary. I was told to say my act of contrition while I was given absolution and I started to emerge from the sacristy with my exclusive, light-hearted gallop. But Father O’Neil called to me to walk quietly.

It being Saturday afternoon, Father O’Neil and Prince reached our house shortly after I did. When I saw them coming, my first impulse was to hide, and

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I felt sick and quivering again. When my sister received a nickel and I none, my shame would be known to the world. But Father O'Neil didn't send either one of us to the kitchen table. He left no nickels there. At the gate, as he was leaving, he said: "Bless my soul! I'm getting so old and forgetful." He groped into his pocket and produced a single fishscale instead of his usual handful of silver.

"Now, what am I to do," he mused, "for I've only one fishscale?"

He looked up in sudden decision. "It will have to go to the older one, I'm afraid," he said apologetically, and turned to me. "Since I have no nickel for my little French girl, would you like to ride Prince down Glen Street all by yourself? I don't think my little Irish girl is as fond of Prince as you are, so maybe you'll both have the best of the bargain."

Gallantly he held his cupped hand for

me to mount Prince. Trustingly, he left Prince's guidance to me. Nobly he strode along the sidewalk, a fine figure of a man, bigger and better than Santa Claus, while Prince and I, as I recall it, galloped like the wind to the corner, back again to meet the priest, and back again to await him.

It may be that Prince did not gallop like the wind but that the good Father merely walked very, very slowly. He was a very old man and went to his reward the following year.

"He loved you children," Mother says. "He was a great man for children. It's a pity you don't remember him better!"

Isabel Currier, secretary of the Frances Sweeney Committee in Boston, is a frequent contributor to COMMON GROUND.

The illustrations are by Bernadine Custer.

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MARY ANN LEE

IF MY husband had announced abruptly that he was the Degnan kidnaper, his mother could not have looked more shocked. Her lips became a thin gray line. For the first time in 43 years of adoring and admiring her only child she looked at him with icy scorn.

"It's disgusting!" she declared. "I shall certainly get out of the house. I won't be here when such a terrible thing goes on. I would be ashamed for my friends to know it."

There was silence for ten minutes, during which her consternation, despair, and contempt grew. Finally she walked

across the living room, stopped in front of us, and said in a voice shaky with emotion, "I wish I had died a year or two ago."

From a 74-year-old woman whose greatest pride is the self-control inherited from her English father, whose Victorian breeding rarely gives way to impulse or strong feeling, these were barbed words. Having aimed her deadliest dart, she marched in frigid fury into the kitchen and began washing dishes.

That was Wednesday morning. That afternoon Martin and I worked at our typewriters on the dining table. Overhead

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a muffled creak went on and on, hour after hour. Whenever worry overtakes her, Grandma rocks in the old mahogany chair saved from her own housekeeping days.

Grimly Martin kept at his writing. He longed to go upstairs, kiss his mother, tell her he was sorry, plead for understanding, but he knew he could not break through her aloof stoniness. While he had expected his pronouncement to arouse a metallic response, he did not anticipate such fission.

"Mother," he had said, "we're having three guests for dinner Sunday—Negroes."

Both of us realized there was no use trying to explain that college-bred Frank Webster is a skilled craftsman at the newspaper plant where Martin works, that his wife, Vera, is a cultivated young woman, that his mother possesses poise, sets of Shakespeare, and Haviland china.

Though Grandma has spent most of her life in a northern state and has no tie closer to the Confederacy than the fact that her mother lived for a few years in Louisville, she boasts of being born in the southern tradition—treat Negroes with every kindness as servants but keep them in their place. To her all Negroes are alike.

So they were to Martin and me until a few years ago. I grew up in Missouri's "Little Dixie" section, where segregation condemns colored citizens to crowded shacks, menial jobs, and servile greetings. Fond as I was in my childhood of Willie May, Lovetta, Lester, Eugene, and our other Negro farm hands, I never thought of them as belonging to the same biological species as my family. Nothing in my Sunday School lessons at the little white church at the crossroads indicated that God had reserved any seats either on earth or in Heaven for his colored creatures.

Martin, passing his youth in the industrial city of East St. Louis, learned from his parents and associates that Negroes belonged in the same category as "hunkies," "polacks," and "wops," all simply to be disregarded except as necessary employees of the packing plants. University training did little to change his ideas.

Now his mother hurled that fact at him as she protested our Sunday invitation. "You were the one who would not sit in the same seat with Negroes at the Lenten service in the cathedral. I can't understand what has changed you!"

"I've been reading magazines and books—and the Bible," Martin answered. "I can't find anything in Jesus' teachings that says Negroes should have separate churches. I admit I was wrong. But I don't have to keep on being wrong."

Grandma knew that here a wife's influence had triumphed over a mother's. But for my religious journalism activities, in which Martin had become tremendously interested, he might have continued to be a nominal and inactive Presbyterian. For some time she had recognized that we were departing from parental molds, but she voiced no objection so long as we merely talked "tolerance." We got her to read the Benedict and Weltfish pamphlet, *The Races of Mankind*, and she said, yes, it was very interesting. She even suffered silently when we brought a little Japanese American girl into our home as a friend for our four children.

But Negroes at our table! That was taking science and religion entirely too literally!

Between Wednesday and Sunday Grandma was present at meals only physically. It's a wonder the water in her glass didn't freeze! When she wasn't resting on her couch, she was in the mahogany chair, rocking, rocking. At times I wanted

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to rush after her drooping shoulders with a, "Don't worry. We'll call off the invitation."

Once I said to Martin, "Is social progress worth the personal cost?" Looking out at our two sons and two daughters romping on the lawn, he replied, "Yes. If ever there is to be lasting world peace, we'll have to start at home—rubbing elbows with our fellow Americans."

We called the children into our bedroom, closed the door, and explained the situation. Grandma was too old to change her prejudices. She was hurt. We were distressed. No one must refer to her attitude.

From 13-year-old Marguerite to 6-year-old Teddy, the youngsters expressed their conviction that if people were nice and you liked them, why should the color of their skin make any difference in their eating with you?

And certainly, insisted 12-year-old Hal, Sergeant Frank Webster was a nice guy.

"And his mother—look at that Dutch cap she crocheted for me," added 10-year-old Gail.

Gail could speak as one with prestige in our interracial education. She started it two years earlier, when the pupils in her third-grade room decided to adopt soldiers and write them cheering letters. Lacking relatives and close friends in service, she appealed to her father for suggestions.

"I'll get you the address of my printer," Martin promised.

Gail did not consider Frank Webster's pigmentation of sufficient importance to mention to her teacher. She was proud, however, that she had the only Negro correspondent in the whole class.

Her uphill letters carried him news of a Brownie picnic, a new pair of shoes, a birthday party, one hundred in spelling (which the Sergeant rewarded with suckers). Her smile and her golden curls both

took well in the picture she sent him, establishing her as a pin-up girl for the company. At Christmas she bought him a sewing kit, which he used until he was discharged. So grateful was Frank's mother for the morale uplift that she, too, started writing to Gail and sending her gifts. She telephoned Martin whenever she had an exciting bit of news about Frank.

Finally, one Sunday afternoon in 1944, we took the four children to see her. We found Mrs. Webster's apartment in a run-down but respectable building. Everything inside bore the mark of quality, and the children were fascinated with the pictures and autographs of celebrities Frank had met when he played in Duke Ellington's band. A cuckoo clock provided quarter-hour entertainment. Soft drinks and homemade fruit cake further stamped Mrs. Webster as a resourceful hostess.

That visit was the clincher in the revision of Martin's and my attitudes on race relations. At close range it was manifest that Mrs. Webster had come out of the same school of social culture of which Martin's own mother was so proud.

Grandma, however, knew nothing of this growing friendship, for she was then making an extended stay with her sisters downstate. When she did come home and hear about "Sergeant Frank," she was satisfied to learn simply that he was a printer from Martin's office.

Gail's letters continued to follow the Sergeant even after he was sent to the Philippines. The letters he mailed her were full of worthwhile information and comment written without that patronizing tone so many adults adopt toward children.

Mrs. Webster called Martin one day to describe Jim-Crowism Frank had suffered in the Philippines. A white officer refused to let the Negro clean-up outfit,

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which Frank commanded, stop at his camp but forced them to walk miles farther through the mosquito-infested jungle before they could rest. Our whole family was indignant, and after that Hal scoured the stores and spent his own money buying Frank the kind of tobacco he liked.

When, near Christmas, Frank was on his way home for discharge and it looked as though he would be delayed in a California harbor, his wife Vera sent Gail a lovely charm bracelet and a friendly note. After a visit with the wife's family, the Websters came on to Chicago and moved in with his mother until their own apartment would be available. Frank returned to his old job. Then it was that we decided to prove our sincerity by inviting all three out to dinner.

Wouldn't Sergeant Frank please wear his soldier's uniform, begged Teddy. Frank would. On Friday Teddy came in from play and asked, "Can Negroes be in Parkwood at night?" Playmates had been talking, I decided, and assured him casually that of course the Websters could come to our house at night. To eliminate any possibility of embarrassment at the suburban railroad station, Martin telephoned the taxi man to watch for three colored passengers.

In the middle of Sunday afternoon Grandma, half sick with a cold, set out in the near-zero weather for the city. The only emotion that showed in her face was one of regret at leaving a plump-breasted turkey and spicy pumpkin pie. I waited until she had gone to bring down from the attic the Wedgwood plates used by the aristocratic guests of her family for several generations.

At six-thirty we heard the train reach Parkwood. In the ten minutes that elapsed before the Websters arrived at our door, the unprecedented nature of this social evening suddenly pounded my

heart and shook my knees. What would my mother and other relatives in Missouri think—and do—if they could know that I was entertaining Negroes at my table? What if the anti-foreigner, anti-Negro, anti-Jew neighbor across the street should drop in? I glanced at Martin walking back and forth from table to davenport as he does under tension. Inhibitions built up over thirty years were putting up a last faint argument.

The taxi stopped. The children raced out. Greetings over, I returned to the kitchen to hurry dinner. During those first moments, the conversation about the weather and the children's ages had that polite, well-bred ring of strangers at a formal tea. The laughter was too determinedly gay.

We sat down at the long dining table. Martin suggested that we sing the Doxology as our grace. Teddy's small voice beside me blending with the elder Mrs. Webster's rich tones in the words, "Praise Him all creatures here below," gave me an upsurge of warmth such as no church choir has ever done. We had God on our side! From that instant tongues relaxed and laughter was spontaneous.

The Sergeant told a joke on his pretty wife—how she had followed literally a hostess' urging to start partaking of a buffet luncheon and embarrassedly found herself appearing hungrier than the others, too politely lingering. Hal wanted to know if Frank got that last can of tobacco he sent. The guests ate with proper appreciation of the cook. Between courses Hal produced a package of chewing gum and offered the Sergeant a stick. Of course it was trick gum that pinched his fingers. Then just after pumpkin pie Hal approached Vera with a card to read. As she opened it, a spring uncoiled and the card jumped at her. She laughed as much as the rest of us.

After the usual offers to help with the

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dishes, as usual rejected, we returned to the other end of our dining-living room. There was a scuffle on the davenport as both Gail and Teddy tried to sit beside the Sergeant. Thereupon he took Teddy on his lap. It was Teddy's supreme moment. Here he was, this close to a real live soldier. He leaned over and inspected the Sergeant's boots carefully. He listened round-eyed as Frank told about his Army experiences.

Mrs. Webster and I shared opinions on incompetent maids. Vera became engrossed in Teddy, who explained that there were no better readers in the first grade than he. She said she wanted some boys and girls of her own. Frank's mother remarked on what good pals Frank had been with his older brother and father, both now dead.

Marguerite and Gail played piano solos (Gail proudly dangling her charm bracelet), and Hal put on a magic show. He made an egg vanish, got himself out of handcuffs, identified cards. Then he enticed the Sergeant into playing "Fifty-two pickup." Gleelessly Hal scattered the card deck on the floor, saying, "There's the fifty-two—you pick them up."

Reluctantly the children went upstairs for bed. Teddy came down again to tell us good night. He kissed his father and me. Then shyly he went and stood beside Vera's chair. He leaned his blond head toward her hesitantly.

"Do you want to kiss me too?" she asked gently. For answer Teddy pressed his lips to her smooth brown cheek.

The children were still awake when the Websters left. They shouted warm good-byes. The door closed. Martin and I turned to each other. From upstairs four excited voices yelled down: "Why, they're about the nicest company we ever

had! When can we have them again?"

"Do you suppose," added Marguerite, "that if the Websters do have some babies she'd let me take care of them?"

Martin and I were washing dishes when Grandma came home. Not a word was said about our guests, but she could not suppress the temptation to pick some turkey bones.

She'd been to the Sunday Evening Club, she told us, and heard Douglas Horton tell about his visit to the Japanese Christian churches. It was very good. (Christians in Japan are so much farther away than Christian Negroes in Chicago!)

Several months have passed. We're to be guests of the Websters as soon as they move into their new apartment. Periodically one of the children inquires, "When are we going to have the Websters out again?" Before I can "shush" them, Grandma asks "Who?" (Just as she did when Martin received a beautiful Father's Day card from the elder Mrs. Webster, special delivery.) She's satisfied with an answer about "a friend at the office." Nor does she notice when Gail and Teddy play with their soldiers and invariably promote "Sergeant Frank" to General.

Martin is forgiven and loved again. His infant precocity—how pretty he was and how young he talked—is still Grandma's favorite topic. Furthermore, she doesn't act a bit as though she were in a hurry to depart this life.

Some day soon we'll have the Websters out again.

Mary Ann Lee is the pseudonym of a University of Missouri journalism graduate, who for twenty years has written articles, stories, skits, and pamphlets in the field of religious and missionary education.

PORTRAIT OF A FRIEND

RAYMOND FORER

His is the labyrinthine mind, filled with the bibliographies of his past. From the depths of his European years and heritage he can still hear the cry of the man he would deny. His Golgotha is within him; his cross is a half-Jewish descent which he would destroy but cannot. He is in search of escape.

Since arriving in the United States Bob Mumson has sought to identify himself with the American norm. He has tried to become as one with those among whom he wishes to live. He has built up modes of conduct to fit his part. He plays a role, and in many ways he plays it well. At least he has learned his lines. He speaks without the trace of an accent. I once told him that he speaks English badly enough to be taken for an American. Occasionally the context of his sentences may be Germanic, but it is only the sensitive person who will note it. At one time he would have been terribly hurt to be told that any trace of his past could be noticed. Now—except for short periods—he is willing to acknowledge, if he still cannot accept, his heritage.

He has adopted the name of his Scotch-Irish mother; he resembles his German-Jewish father. The dichotomy is not merely that of a split ancestry. It goes deeper: his is the schizophrenic soul. He has experienced more than the normal American. He was driven from Germany; later he had to leave Italy, because he had been tagged a Jew.

The orthodox Jewish girl he loves will not marry him because he calls himself a

non-Jew. He tries to laugh it off. He told me after receiving a letter from Sara, "I was called a goddamn Jew in Germany and Italy, but this is the first time I've been called a goddamn goy." He shrugged his shoulders. I thought Sara had acquired a form of inverted anti-Semitism. I found, however, that Bob had colored the picture. She had stated her case. Sara also had been a refugee. In Germany she had led a far from religious life. She had reacted positively where Bob had reacted negatively to the same situation. Her escape was not an escapism; hers was an acceptance. She had told herself: If I am to be a Jew, I shall be one entirely. I shall take pride in my yellow badge. Bob would deny that he had ever worn one.

I first met Bob when he walked into my office in New Guinea. He had been assigned to the Public Relations section as a photographer. He took good pictures. He was a quiet, friendly chap, and I liked him. He bitched like every other enlisted man; he had a friend and that one friend was enough. I tried in every way to get closer to him. But it was only the superficial that he revealed. He was careful. Sometimes I thought that I saw more in the man than there actually was, that I felt in him that which did not exist except in my own imagination.

He transferred out of Public Relations to Counter Intelligence. He liked his job. We wrote to each other.

Finally we both got out of the Army, and I visited him in New York. I met his mother and sister. They spoke with strong

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English accents, which they deliberately accentuated; it helped when they needed a job, for the Anglophiles found in them their "social equals."

His sister, who had received her doctorate from the University of Heidelberg, did not respect the lovers of their English-affected speech. She once described them to me as "the upper crust: a bunch of crumbs held together by their own dough." She was willing to take some of the dough. I liked his folks. His mother reminded me of a girl I had known in Australia. His sister was intelligent, with the strongest personality I have ever known in a woman. She is an admirable person.

I learned more about Bob and his family. His father had been a wealthy physician. Bob has written: "I am the son of a Jew. My father is the son of a Jew. My grandfather was one of the biggest and richest bankers in Hamburg." His mother, who traced her ancestry back to the time of the Norman invasion, had fallen in love with his father on a visit to Germany when she was seventeen. They had married and had been very happy. They had had a luxurious home on the Richter Weg, one of the more exclusive private roads near the Hindenburg Platz. By an accident of fate his parents had been in the United States during and immediately following the first World War and Bob had been born here. He was, therefore, an American citizen. He had known the life of a rich European: fed, spoon-fed, cared for, pampered, waited on.

His mother and sister had that Anglo-Saxon outlook—and look—on life. They were safe, but still the reaction of their past was their stimulus: their friends were refugees and Jews. They could only be happy in the bohemian atmosphere of New York, where intellectuals could be intellectuals without being self-conscious about it or labeled as freaks. They had

acquired the mark of their kin, if not their coloring.

Bob, who realized his "Jewish appearance," felt at ease only among Jews. He came to hate them as projections of himself, that *alter ego* which clung to him and could not be hidden. It was an ugly sore of which only he was conscious. He was the hypochondriac Jew: his ill was a mirror-sickness.

I read the titles and tried to get at the context of his life: his autobiography had many chapters, if not many volumes. I have been able to read some; I have had peeps at others; some of the pages I have had to cut; others I still have been unable to see. There are the chapters headed My Father, My Mother, My Sister, Germany, Italy, Escape, The Jew, The Refugee, The Refuge, Fate, Hope, Acceptance, Love, Mea Culpa, The War Years, Peace, What Am I?

Bob's father is in England. He has gone to work for the international industrial cartel of which he was the German representative before the war. He is, I believe, one of the world's authorities on atomic energy.

Bob has not seen his father in eight years. His parents separated when Mussolini, playing the jackal, promulgated his anti-Semitic laws in Italy, to which the family had fled when Hitler had come into power. His mother wanted safety; his father wanted to fight the Germany he had once loved, with all the knowledge at his command. The children came with their mother to New York; the father became a slave-laborer in the English branch of the cartel. His father was still the German-Jew in England. They used him; they are using him. He is not accepted; he is still the Jew.

The break between the parents was a bitter one. Bob's mother, as a reaction to her suffering, has inversely blamed the Jews. Bob has had to explain often to his

mother that she was married to a Jew, that her friends are Jewish, that her children are half-Jewish. It has been hard for Bob, for he feels very close to his father. He has written Sara in explanation: "I have been brought up in a Jewish environment. My mother's background and influence have never played the least part in my upbringing. Few people actually know that I lived from my fourth until my nineteenth year in Europe. My early school days were spent in Germany, in fact until 1933, when I had to leave. It was a German grammar school, German high school—Prinz Eugen Gymnasium and Hessen. In Italy, it was always German schooling I received—Deutsches Gymnasium in Rome, Kaiser Wilhelm Schule, Trento.

When Sara wrote Bob that she would not marry him, he answered with an *Apologia Pro Vita Mia*. "I have tried to escape," he wrote, "over and over again from my background. Today I realize that this is impossible; it cannot be done. One cannot escape from oneself. Too bad that I awaken to this truth so late."

I have known Bob to beat his chest metaphorically and shout *Mea Culpa*, but it is only the supersensitive person who can write, "I am a coward. I have represented myself as someone I wanted to be, not as I am. I did not want to be hurt again."

His letter to Sara is a long one. He has written to her: "Outwardly I give the impression of being just another American boy. My English is free from accent, my mannerisms are American, my clothing, my appearance are Anglo-Saxon." (Even in his letter to the girl he loves, he could not quite say, I look the Jew, the son of my father.) "No person today could identify me with the Robert Edward Mendelssohn, Jewish refugee, who landed with his sister in New York after having been kicked out of Italy for being

a Jew." He continues: "I had been driven from Germany for the same reason: I was a Jew. I had seen my friends, Jewish kids of the neighborhood, beaten up and mistreated, my father had suffered at the hands of the Nazis. He was a Jew.

"I had \$150 when I landed in the United States. The old fortune was gone, the name meant nothing. I was just another German-Jewish refugee. By a mere accident I had been born in the United States, yet I spoke with a broken English accent. My fluent German and Italian were of little use here. I had no trade, no experience, no profession, no home, no country, no feeling of being wanted. Those few friends and relatives I had in New York were in the same plight—German-Jewish refugees. It had been a long hard road from the luxurious home in Germany to a dingy little hole on East 4th Street.

"At nineteen I was on my own."

Bob found it hard going. He took odd, mean jobs. He worked, this rich man's son who had known only tutors, governesses and maids, in cafeterias as a busboy, as a toilet attendant. He was earning \$14, \$15, \$18 a week. He studied at night, at squeezed-in moments. It became apparent that they had not escaped anti-Semitism by escaping from Germany and Italy. His sister, who had always spoken better English than Bob, took her mother's maiden name. Bob did also.

His sister became a teacher in an exclusive girls' school, a job she could not hold with a Jewish name. In 1941 Robert Edward Mendelssohn became Robert Mumson. Jobs became easier to get. As an American of English descent he finally got a job at \$56 a week. His hours were long; his job was exacting. Six days a week he got up at five-thirty and returned home at nine. Three nights a week he attended school. On those nights he did not get home until eleven.

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"I realized," he later wrote, "that one reason for my comparative success was the fact that I had denied my background. I was working too hard to feel remorse. Slowly and surely I was assimilating; I was adjusting myself to my surroundings."

Bob had, in fact, shoved his past so far back into his subconscious that he came to believe he had erased it completely. He had not been hurt for a long time, for when the term Jew was used disparagingly he refused to recognize or associate it with himself. The stigma of terminology was no longer for him. He was almost ready to call others "Jew."

With his transfer to the Counter Intelligence Corps in the Army, he thought he had made the final transition. His escape was complete. No other boy of foreign extraction that he knew had received an assignment as a special agent. It flattered him. He had been accepted. He no longer need watch to see if he were a "white" Jew. He was a 100 per cent American. He had achieved his goal. He was safe. His subconscious adjustment went so far that he began to forget the German and Italian he had once spoken fluently. He wanted to be the American who could not speak a foreign language, who was contemptuous of the countries where the bathroom was not the first prerequisite of culture. I have heard him make slurring remarks about Australians and Filipinos. He was an American.

But he could not escape. It was a false security. He returned to the United States to find that this was not the end but the beginning. It was all repeating itself over again. In New York his friends were still Jews and refugees. He felt himself being pulled back into the maelstrom of his past. But he clung to the security he had known for a short time. He did not want to become another Jew in New York.

As he wrote to Sara: "In my escape I even went so far as to promise myself

that I would not marry a Jewish girl, never, never bring children into this world to know their father's true identity. I can never let my children go through the hell I have known."

But even if he could escape reality, he could not escape the haunting image of six million dead European Jews. He could not escape a physical nausea when he learned of friends and relatives in concentration camps. It still hurt. The pain was there.

Gradually the transition—the return to an acceptance—is taking place. He fights against accepting his Jewishness, but it is no longer a battle—they are skirmishes. In moments of weakness—or is it strength?—he has written: "I hate my guts. I look in the mirror and feel sick. Looking back at little incidents, and it was always small matters by which I managed to camouflage my own background, I find that I exaggerated my English accent in German, that I deny my Jewish descent as an American, that I pretend to an ignorance of even the obvious traditions."

His letters to Sara are more personal, and perhaps more self-revealing. "When we ate in restaurants, my dear, I would sneak in some silly questions, even though I knew the answers. I would tell you, facetiously and with exaggeration, 'But I love po'k chops.' It flattered me when you mistook me for a non-Jew. I can remember many little actions now. I never gave you a chance to get to know me, and love is based on knowledge of the other person. I never gave you the chance of becoming a friend, because friendship is based on common experience. I never permitted us to get real close. Yet I was not strong enough nor honest enough to let you go. I loved you, but with all my might—and my weakness: the desire to forget what I had seen and known, to forget my Jewishness—I fought it off.

"I have failed to escape. But I still

cannot say easily 'I am a Jew.' Give me time."

There is little more to tell. Bob no longer denies; Bob no longer wants to escape. He is letting things rest. "There is my Jewish heritage," he has said, "and the status quo is there also. What the resulting synthesis will be I do not know. I will let fate play out its role. I realize that I cannot run away. With Sara's love, perhaps I shall learn to accept with pride the reality of my Jewishness."

It may all be summed up in Bob's expressed desire. "I seek very little now from life," he has told me. "I want a place I can say is mine. I want peace, a job, a wife, a home. I want to raise a bunch of squalling bambinos."

And he shrugs his shoulders.

Raymond Forer is the author of an earlier piece in CG: "Little Girl," in the Spring 1946 issue. He is now a student at the University of Denver.

MOVE TO THE REAR

MELBA WRIGHT AND
EDWIN L. MAYER

THE GREEN and tan cross-town bus bumped along the untidy, store-lined streets toward Union Square like a flabby old woman window-shopping. It plodded up to the Square and jolted to a sudden stop, doors clicking open, its passengers spilling out into the sunlight.

"Okay. Let 'em out." The driver drawled the order insolently at the newcomers, stretching his hard, broad body. His thick fingers made change, issued transfers deftly; then he turned with an impudent grin to the slim girl in the neat blue suit on his left and tipped his cap back on his head until it sat at a jaunty angle. "So, it's a date for Saturday night, huh?"

She nodded, smiling her assent brightly. The poise of her smooth blond head and the erectness of her slight shoulders lent the smile an air of dignity.

Damn, he thought, for a slip of a girl, she can sure make you feel as though she was Mrs. Roosevelt. But that was what had got him in the first place. He

had noticed her about three weeks ago when a dame had tried to pass off a kid who was closer to ten years old for five. He had made the Mama hold the brat on her lap since the rule provided that children for whom you didn't pay fare weren't supposed to occupy needed space.

She'd sat forward, listening, her eyes alert, and he had the sensation that she was seeing inside of him, that she knew that he knew he was making a national debt out of a five-cent fare. What really got him sore though was her obvious enjoyment of the whole scene, and he'd sniped at her, "Be sure and stay for the next feature, Sister. It'll kill you."

To his surprise, she hadn't huffed and puffed like some of the dames with their cupid bow lips and fancy hair-dos, the dames with the tight skirts who gave you the eye, and then, when you looked at them, glared back at you as if you were a sex maniac. She had just laughed. "There's no place like New York, is there?" She was different. She had class.

The first week he'd teased her about reading her newspaper so intently. "How's Superman doing?" Or, "Say, is it true that Stalin wants Coney Island for the Reds?" Once she asked him about the Transport Workers and whether he thought they'd really go out on strike. When the second week rolled around, he tried dating her but got only as far as finding out her name was Roberta Culahan and she worked in a book store. He began calling her Bobby, only it somehow didn't bring her down, that is, make her seem any more like other girls, so he went back to Roberta. Now, the third week, she'd finally agreed to go out with him. Although she hadn't said anything to intimate it, just the tone of her gave him the feeling that she was doing him a favor. But if it took his pay envelope, she was going to learn that just because a guy pushed a bus, he wasn't a cheap-skate, a nobody. Not him. He could make the grade with anyone, any place in the whole damn USA.

He winked at her surreptitiously and turned back to the wheel. He was about to step on the gas when the bearded old man in the glossy, black suit came panting up to the bus, lifting himself on with one hand, fumbling for his fare with the other. As the bus lurched forward, he clutched on to the driver's arm, then released it apologetically with a sad little smile.

"Whataya tryin' to do, Pop?" the driver demanded. "Get us all killed?" To the busload he barked, "Okay, move to the rear. No floor show up front today." He was answered by sniggers and mumbling and, "What does he think he's got in the rear, a trailer?"

He was about to say to Roberta, "A comedian," when he remembered that the old man, who was still standing beside him looking lost and distracted, had not paid his fare. He said, "This ain't bank

night, Pop. Better slip a nickel in the box."

The old man's words stumbled over each other. "Could you please tell me—" He faltered, stared at the driver, then broke into a happy little cry of recognition. "Ben!"

The driver stiffened and his hands gripped the wheel. But the old man babbled on joyfully. "How many years is it? Ten. What am I talking about? You were so big." He measured with his hand. "And here I am on your bus." He shook his head with unbelievable pleasure. "On your bus, Ben."

"Sorry, Pop." The driver smiled sardonically. "You got the wrong guy." He could feel Roberta looking at him and he laughed flippantly out of the side of his mouth. "That's the kind of face I got. One week I'm Joe, the next week I'm Clarence." He stopped for a red light. "Nine out of ten take me for New England." He scratched his head. "Don't ask me why."

As he shifted into first, he saw her amused little smile in the mirror, the kind of smile, he told himself, that makes you wonder if she's laughing with you or at you. But when Saturday night came, that would be changed. He said, "Did I tell you? We're gonna see *Call Me Mister*." His voice bragged. "There's a waiting line into October, but if you know the right people—"

He felt a gentle tap on his shoulder. The old man was smiling at him warmly. "Ben, how is your father?"

He pushed the door switch and waited while a fat woman loaded down with boxes struggled in shushing a pale boy in a sailor suit who whined, "I wanna sit by a window. You said I could. You said."

He stared coldly at the old man. "Will you please move to the rear, Pop? You're blocking traffic."

The old man breathed on his glasses,

then wiped them with his handkerchief. "Your father," he announced fondly, "was such a gentleman." He turned to the woman with the packages. "His father was such a gentleman."

The driver glanced helplessly at Roberta, but she seemed to be staring through him. Damn her. Just because a shabby old gent in a shiny black suit claimed to know him wasn't a reason for her to get on her high horse. She'd find out what a right guy he was come Saturday night. He tried to crack through her coldness. "Say, you know who we're going to see at the Wedgwood Room Saturday?"

The old man was tugging at his sleeve again. He could feel himself sweating as the old man asked, "Ben, does your father still have the grocery? Your mother didn't know it," he chuckled, "but we used to sit in the back for hours, playing cards, talking about the world. Your father predicted that a Hitler—"

The bus screeched to a halt. "Damn," the driver muttered, "almost missed that light."

He heard the old man reiterate to the woman with the packages, "His father was such a gentleman."

He felt his face getting hot and red. He couldn't look at Roberta. "Listen, Pop," he said, trying to levee his anger, "for the last time, I don't know you and you don't know me. Now will you please quit bothering people and move to the rear?"

The old man seemed confused, as though he was suddenly surrounded by a crowd of strangers who had a moment before been familiar. "You don't remember?" His gaze was incredulous. "My, how many times you broke my window playing ball." He sighed. "And like a fool, I used to climb out on the fire escape and throw the ball down to you."

The passengers' titters turned into laughter that blinded the driver with

humiliation, and it was only when he saw the blue-coated officer motion him on impatiently that he realized the light had turned to green. His wrath made the bus leap forward. He could visualize Roberta's face telling him she thought he was a nobody, that now she knew his real identity. "Listen, Pop," he shouted desperately, "either you shut up or get off this bus. Nobody's interested in what a crazy old man has to say." The wheel was wet underneath his clammy hands. "Now move to the rear before I—"

The old man's eyes stopped him. Then he saw the demand for respect which had leaped into them die out, and the old man drew a heavy breath as though he'd been kicked in the stomach. He moved quietly away.

"There." The driver experienced a momentary triumph. That would show Roberta how he felt about people like the old man. He turned, expecting to meet her approval, but her look seemed to draw a wall between them that he could not quite vault. His fear made him angry. He'd show her. He was as good as anybody. Better. He said, "Where do I pick you up Saturday night?" She began to read her paper. He raised his voice. "I said, where'll I meet you?" He added pointedly, "Bobby." She turned a page without glancing up.

He pushed the door switch savagely, scowling at the new arrivals. Who did she think she was? The Duchess of Windsor? Or Lana Turner? He knew a dozen girls who would be pleased to death to be seen with him. He looked over at her but she was still intent on her paper. She seemed kind of skinny in that blue suit. Funny, he had never noticed how thin she was before. He never went for skinny dames. It must have been the blond hair that had got him. She was still bent over the paper. Yeah. It was the hair all right. But she ought to do

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something to it. Get one of those fluffy feather-dos, or put it up in curlers or something. Damn. What the devil had he ever seen in her anyway? He had knocked himself out trying to date her when plenty of gals with real class kept calling him at the bus terminal almost every day. It made him mad just to think about the way she had lorded it all over him and he had let her. He began to laugh. He'd show her. No one was going to high-hat him and get away with it.

He called, "Hey, Pop," and noticed the old man still hadn't found a seat and was standing right beside Roberta's. The old man looked over at him. "Hey, it just hit me like a ton of bricks. You got a kid named Herman, haven't you?" He scratched his chin elaborately. "I don't know what's the matter with my memory lately. Sure. Your kid and me went to P.S. 225. I'll never forget," he guffawed, "the way you used to stand over him to get him to practice on his fiddle. Was he lousy." The driver shook his head as he swung the bus up Eighth Avenue. He tried to catch Roberta's eye. "How could I have made such a mistake?"

The old man stood perfectly straight, appearing almost majestic with his white beard against the black suit. Like pictures of Moses, the driver thought, in those little books we read at home on Passover night. The old man's eyes were sad. "No," he said slowly. "You didn't make a mistake. I did. You just look like somebody I used to know."

The driver exerted every atom of his strength to keep the bus from swerving crazily. When he looked around again, the old man was sitting in Roberta's seat and she was standing over him smiling warmly.

As the newcomers climbed aboard, he yelled at them in a frenzy, "Move to the rear! Dammit! Move to the rear!"

Melba Wright and Edwin L. Mayer have been working together as a writing team for the past year. Prior to this Miss Wright worked for CBS on such shows as "Death Valley Sheriff" and doing scripts for "Suspense," "Cavalcade of America," and so on. Mr. Mayer has just finished a psychiatric novel and is completing another on Mexico.

AMERICA'S ABORIGINAL SOCIETIES COME INTO THEIR OWN

JOHN COLLIER

THE CONTROLLING fact of Western Hemisphere Indian life today and of present governmental Indian enterprise is the triumph of the group life of the Indians. This triumph contains within itself the future of the Indians and their renewed power to benefit mankind.

Across four hundred years the struggle of the Indians in behalf of their group life was waged as an enormous delaying action. Indian groups numbering more than forty thousand social units in the two Continents sustained this delaying action, each largely in isolation from all the others. In the aeonian, multitudinous process of this struggle, deep changes took place in Indian group life. The changes were not merely mechanical. They did not consist only in the loss of this and that native "trait" and the acceptance of this and that European "trait." Rather, organic assimilation and vital synthesis took place. The Indian societies lived, adjusted, employed a sustained volition negative and positive, created.

There was no method of destruction that was not used against them, and most of them coped with all the methods of destruction. Legal proscription, administrative proscription; military slaughter; enslavement, forced labor, peonage; confiscation of nearly all lands, forced individualization of residual lands; forced dispersal, forced mass-migration, forced religious conversions; religious persecutions which hunted down the social soul in its depths, and the propaganda of scorn; catastrophic depopulation, which mowed

down the native leadership and the repositories of tradition; bribery of leadership, and the intrusion of quisling governments by the exploiting powers. These things Spain and Portugal did; and the Southern republics from the date of their independence until yesterday; and the United States for more than a hundred years prior to 1933. Indian group-life—Indian societies—outwore all of the destructions.

Now, at last, the Indians' delaying action has changed in some countries, and is changing in others, to a strategy of advance. The proscriptions are ended or are being ended. The nations are accepting the Indians' societies as being unkillable and also indispensable. Rondon in Brazil in 1910 first challenged the proscription, ended it, and built Brazil's Indian service upon the Indian groups. Mexico, in the unrolling of her last revolution, affirmed the ejidal values. The United States after 1933 radically enunciated, and set complexly into motion, the policy of social action vested in the Indian groups and executed by the groups from their own centers. In Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, the *comunidades*, numbering four thousand in Peru alone, are becoming incorporated into the social service and agricultural improvement programs, the educational systems, and the slow-starting, yet insistently advancing, agrarian revolution.

Antonio Garcia of Colombia, in 1943, movingly pointed out that the age-old assault against the Indian societies had been marked by two conditions. One condition,

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the more commonly taken into account, was the attempted extermination of the societies, and it had failed. The other condition was the exclusion of the societies from the flow of national life—the flow of political power, of economic benefits, and of technology. What would the Indian societies become, what would they achieve, if this second condition were reversed? Would their power to create, within the national and the world setting, prove to be as great as their power of resistance, of endurance, and of inner regeneration, had proved to be? That is the question to be answered by the Indians and the nations together, in the new epoch now begun.

This article ventures a few generalizations and predictions concerning the myriadly diverse societies of the Indian. But it is well, first, for the reader's image of representative Indian societies (as of today) to be renewed.

Bolivia and Peru supply our first cases. On the cold heights, at 13,000 feet elevation, the thousand-year-old, pre-Incan community of Collana looks down from three leagues away upon La Paz, the capital of Bolivia. The Collanas number only some 600. Social management is entirely in the hands of the pre-Conquest *ayllu*, or tribe. Each year there is carried out the reassignment of land to families; the cattle browse on the common range; the planting and harvesting are done by voluntary co-operation. Annually the people elect their *alcalde* (chief) and their *cabildo* (council). These officers regulate the use of all resources, and sit in judgment on all cases civil and criminal, imposing at times the death penalty. No outsider is permitted to remain overnight in Collana. Since the Incaic years, there practically has been no change: only a loss of contact with the wider Indian world which became dispersed

or immured after the Conquest, and a severe restriction of the land base.

In Peru, near Jauja, is the Indian community of Muquiyauyo. Muquiyauyo is constituted by the union of four *ayllus*, each having its own elected officers. These sit in the council which meets each week; and the council includes all males over twenty years old. Offices are so rotated that every male finds himself in due time drawn into some responsible function of the government.

In Peru, any unused portion of an *hacienda* or church estate may be taken over by the government and offered for public sale. Muquiyauyo, out of its savings from wages earned at the mines, purchased a thousand acres of such land. On this new land, alfalfa was cultivated through joint labor. In ten years, 70,000 soles were saved up; this saving was invested in a hydro-electric plant, built through contributed labor. The plant generates 4,400 volts; it lights and powers the community, and supplies half of the electricity needed by the town of Jauja, four miles away. An electrically run flour mill grinds the corn of the community; thus the women are released for leisure or for the crafts.

Muquiyauyo has built, through communal labor, a rural school for 300 pupils, and has presented it to the government.

Here is witnessed the *mita*, or co-operative labor institution, of Incaic days, before the Spaniards perverted it into enslavement. Every able-bodied male contributes labor to the public work. Women may substitute for the males of their families.

Out of its communal fund, Muquiyauyo furnishes to parents a bonus of five soles for each male infant born, and two and a half soles for each female infant. When a child seeking additional schooling, or a young man or woman seeking university training, leaves the community,

the communal treasury subsidizes him.

Muquiyauyo is one of the many communities (there exist, even, co-operative federations of communities) which demonstrate not merely the "staying" capacity of Indian societies but their adequacy for modern interaction and adjustment. It has brought alive many of the ancient values of the Indian races, has modernized their immemorial man-nature co-operation, and has displayed readiness for innovation and the capacity to innovate.

We leave the Andes, passing by the Aymara of the Bolivian-Peruvian highlands, a people who are described as "taciturn, ugly of spirit, melancholic," yet who adore their children and who name each of their animals with endearing names and love them with seeming passion, and who love the bleak places of their bitter land. We glance at the Eskimos of Greenland and of the arctic shores of Alaska. In Greenland the literate Eskimo culture is two centuries old. Novels, poetry, histories, drama; an excellent press; and a perfectly normal merger of the Eskimo way with the European (Danish) is observed. In Alaska, we find that most of the Eskimo communities carry forward distributive co-operation, modern style, with perfect, easy-going success. Yet their social forms and their personality types remain largely what they were before the earliest contact with any other men.

We go down to the warm southeastern Alaska coast, and we observe Metalakaka, a west-coast tribe, which within the memory of the living was uprooted and driven in migration from Canada; a social organization which is an all-embracing co-operative commonwealth, wholly modern in its forms. Fishing and canning are a corporate enterprise; the municipality owns and operates all of its utilities, including electricity. When, here and there around the world, relief needs present

themselves, Metalakaka sends its check unsolicited. Complete modernity, embracing the unforgotten past.

From among many cases in the United States, I choose one only, which has been observed and interpreted with more of profundity than perhaps any other. It is the Hopi Indian society of the northern Arizona plateau.

In its beautiful but very difficult desert land, on its high rock mesas swept by storm and brooded over by sun and stars which seem very near, the Hopi race has sustained an unbroken, undiminished continuity for more than fifteen hundred years. Its whole past, in nothing dead and gone, moves on explicitly and consciously into its present; and all is magnetized from a future which draws the tribal soul onward as a work of art in process draws its creator. Through an immense, ceaseless action of the will, the Hopis believe *that they help* to sustain the universe. Writes Ward Shepard in the *Scientific Monthly* of February 1946:

"Food and water must be wrested by the Hopis with infinite skill from a semi-arid land, subject to severe droughts, crop failures, floods, and, in recent times, soil erosion. Famine, through the centuries, has been an ever-present threat, and certainly often a grim reality. Yet the Hopis met and mastered the challenge of the desert both on the physical and on the social and spiritual level. On the physical side, the desert forced them to achieve a remarkably effective technology of dry farming. On the social level, it forced a democratic, co-operative social structure which tolerated no waste of human energy and no individual self-seeking, and yet achieved a high degree of human freedom and individual development. And on the spiritual side, this starkly demanding earth-environment, which permits no negligence and no mistakes, yet yields reluctantly to precision,

insight, and co-operation, may well be the ultimate source of the central philosophical theme of Hopi religion and world-view. The entire realm of nature, say the Hopis, in its farthest cosmic sweep and through human society which is a part of nature, constitutes a system of reciprocal and mutually supporting relations, in whose working-out the decisions, actions, and even the thoughts of men play an important part. Thus, the 'primitive' Hopis anticipated by several centuries some of the main philosophical doctrines of William James and Alfred North Whitehead."

Ward Shepard, as quoted, was commenting upon *The Hopi Way*, the first published volume of a research into Indian personality jointly sponsored by the United States Indian Service and the University of Chicago. The detailed findings of this research cannot be given here, but I quote one paragraph of my own Foreword to the first volume:

"Seen whole, the Hopi are a profoundly and intensely practical people. Seen whole. That nature-man constitution which they have built through their ages will incorporate any gain—any new tool or goal—which is contributive to Hopi destiny. Hopi destiny is not small or eccentric, but catholic and cosmic. The Hopi world-view and art of self-making are not less congenial to the world's future than to its less-recent past. The opportunity of pedagogy and administration is immense and fascinating, in terms of the Hopi. But in terms of the Hopi this opportunity must be pursued. The mere intrusion of influence is mostly wasted effort; when successful, it is in that measure damaging. Only those who read this book [*The Hopi Way*] thoughtfully will know how tragically damaging the unsophisticated intrusion of supposed benefits into Hopi life can be."

To return to the question implied by

Antonio Garcia of Colombia—what will the many thousand Indian societies become, what will they achieve, as gradually they are brought within the flow of national life, the flow of political power and economic advantages, the advantages of technology, and the currents of world thinking and struggle?

I believe that the evidence justifies certain predictions.

The Western Hemisphere nations increasingly will base their Indian program on the Indian social groups. They will do this with greater boldness and inventiveness as experience is accumulated, is recorded, and is interchanged between nations.

The Indian societies will keep their ancient democracy, sometimes adapting it to the larger tasks which they will take to themselves, sometimes with no adaptation at all. There will exist productive Indian local democracies to the number of forty thousand or more—democracies social and economic, not merely political. These Indian social units will become federated within nations and across national boundaries. They will traffic with the other social groupings within the nations, particularly with labor, with conservation bodies, with research institutions and organizations concerned with the arts.

These Indian societies will supplement their ancient co-operative forms with modern co-operative forms; they well may become the major embodiment in the Western Hemisphere of the co-operative movement of the world.

With the advance of "integral" education, including bi-lingual literacy, the realized mental potential and the social energy of the Indian societies, and their biological vigor, will increase by hundreds, even thousands, per cent. A large number of their individuals will pass out into the general life of their nations, and they will

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pass into higher and higher social levels. They will not become divorced from the societies which formed them and gave them their orientation; they will diffuse the Indian influence throughout the nations.

As the Indian societies move from their four-centuries-long delaying action into a confident and rejoicing advance, expression along many lines of literature, of the arts, of religion, and of philosophy will take its rise. The ancient-modern Indian affirmation of the deathless, reciprocal man-nature relationship (one of their greatest gifts to the world) will flow into poetry and symbolic art of cosmic intensity, tranquillity, and scale. The esoteric art of the tribes has all of these characteristics now; bi-lingual literacy, in the native Indian and in the European tongues, within the situation of a triumphing social advance, will carry the inward, esoteric achievement outward to universal man.

The movement will be inward and outward at one and the same time. Inward to the world-old springs, buried or never buried, which still flow because the societies have not died. Outward to the world.

There will dawn in the minds of the nations, partly through Indian influence, two realizations. One, that their soils, waters, forests, wild life, the whole web of life which sustains them, are being

wasted—often irreparably and fatally destroyed. The other, that their local community life, their local democracy, their values which are required for beauty, wisdom and strength—their very societies, are wasting away even as their natural resources are wasting. As these realizations increase, the nations will turn to their Indian societies more and more, seeking there the clues to the saving of the earth which they have wronged, before that too-late time when lethal revenge is taken by the wronged earth; and for clues to the saving of the national being and soul of the Western countries.

All of these things will be, if the nations shall maintain and increase their enterprise and research into Indian need and power. More slowly, less decisively, they will be, even if the nations shall regress in their Indian programs. For the delaying action of the Indian societies is ended. They have proved that they cannot be destroyed, and they are advancing upon the world.

Former Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier is now president of the Institute of Ethnic Affairs in Washington.

The material of this article will be incorporated in Mr. Collier's Indians of the Americas, to be published in the autumn by W. W. Norton.

GRASS ROOTS AND CITY BLOCKS

RUDOLPH M. WITTENBERG

Excitement spread through the block like a brush fire. Posters were strung across the street from fire escape to fire escape. A cardboard sign hung from the window of Mrs. Gonzalez' apartment, and Mrs. Antonini was already outside getting the table ready for her spaghetti bowls. Next to her, Mrs. Walters set up the fried chicken, and on the other side of the vacant lot, Mr. Ross had installed his keg of beer and paper cups.

It was only five o'clock on a warm June afternoon but the block was buzzing. This was the day for the block party. To the people who passed through in cars and trucks, it looked like just another neighborhood affair. While they stopped and smiled and enjoyed the sight of people of different colors and in different dresses preparing food and setting up a bandstand, they could not know that this was a very special and unusual event in this East Harlem block, newly organized for community activity.

Later in the evening the spotlights from the nearby Union Settlement were carried up into the house directly opposite the empty lot. The men who installed them on the fire escape were young Negro veterans, and the man who gave permission to bring all this cable and iron through his neat little apartment was a cigar maker who had come from Puerto Rico only a few months earlier.

When the spotlights were connected and the white beam shot across the bandstand, it highlighted the president of the organization, Mrs. Walters, a young Negro woman, standing next to an Italian

American poolroom owner, getting ready to make a speech. The microphone through which Mrs. Walters spoke had been rented from the curio shop on the corner, and the money to pay for it had been the result of a special collection by Mrs. O'Reilly, one of the Irish American neighbors on the block.

Mrs. Walters, tall and attractive looking, adjusted the microphone, and the crowd on the sidewalk and in the street gathered to listen. They listened intently because Mrs. Walters had their respect. She had won it by her work as president of the block organization, an organization of rank-and-file people who had joined hands in order to get for themselves some of the things that they could get only if they pulled together. Mrs. Walters, like the others, lived in a small three-room tenement flat with her four children, after having decided to accept public welfare and take care of her family following her husband's desertion, rather than working and leaving the care of the youngsters to neighbors. She had not found it easy to speak to a large group when the block organization had been started a year ago. She had all the normal and natural fears that go with inexperience. But she had been able to overcome them slowly, partly because she was a born leader, partly because she had had help from the Neighborhood Center for Block Organization.

On that June evening when she stood on the small bandstand and the night had darkened the ugly tenements behind her, she felt free, and her face, clear and warm in the spotlight, radiated confidence.

In her soft voice she told the people of the block what the party was for:

"Cars and trucks used to speed through this block and knock down our children at play. A committee of us circulated a petition and we obtained 150 signatures. We presented this petition to the captain of the police precinct who has co-operated and has promised to close the street to all traffic, once our block committee gets under way. Now we are raising funds to get a full-time, trained, recreation leader right here in the block. We need some volunteers to help us. Already, we have placed collection boxes in the beer garden, Joe's club, Reverend Green's church, Miss Nellie's beauty parlor, and in the music shop. We have written two Councilmen, one of whom will speak here tonight, and one Congressman, and they have given us some help. But we need more help from you people because this is going to be the finest playstreet in the city, run by ourselves. We will hire the leader and really see that our children are not running around wild. I don't want to make a long speech because we have some surprise entertainment for you. A famous band leader, whom you all know, has promised to come down tonight and sing for us. You all know him—Louis Jordan."

The teen-agers by the hundreds rushed up to the bandstand when Louis Jordan appeared, quiet and friendly, holding on to the microphone and trying to talk across the roar from the block. People came from both ends of the street, and it seemed that the rolling waves of ever increasing figures moving from the dark into the center of the lights would never end.

That night the block organization laid the groundwork for many important developments to follow. Raising money was one thing; hearing a famous band leader was another; eating fried chicken and spaghetti, drinking beer and soda, getting acquainted, all these were little steps. But

perhaps the most unusual achievement was never noticed because by now it seemed so natural to the people who had lived in this block for ten years and before this had hardly said hello to one another. Heavy, friendly Mrs. Antonini, who always looked out the window of her first-floor apartment, had never before stood next to Mrs. Jones, the pretty little Negro woman who lived next door. Mrs. O'Reilly had spoken to many of the people before, but she had never felt so close to all of them.

On that night, as the Negroes tried Mrs. Antonini's spaghetti and the Italian neighbors tried Mrs. Walters' fried chicken and drank the beer and danced, they were just neighbors interested in having fun together, in raising money enough so that the kids could have a decent summer. The Puerto Ricans, who had talked to very few of the neighbors because they spoke only in Spanish, danced with them now, and laughed with them, and felt part of the block, part of the people.

At one in the morning, two policemen from the nearby precinct came by and asked that the party come to an end because the neighboring blocks couldn't sleep. The people played a few more records, drained the keg of beer, and gave the last plates of fried chicken and spaghetti to the young folks who would help clean up.

One of the women in a nearby block who couldn't sleep because of the noise came over the next day and asked what the racket was about. The block committee told her. "That sounds good," said Mrs. Dunbar. "Why can't we do the same thing in our block?"

"No reason why you can't," Mrs. Walters said. "Come on over to the Neighborhood Center, and we'll see how they can help you get an organization going."

The worker asked Mrs. Dunbar whether she thought she could interest other peo-

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ple in her block. She was confident that she could. Thus began the first steps in a new block organization.

The start was slow as it is in every real grass-roots movement, and it was the job of the trained worker at the Neighborhood Center to understand the people of the new block group and enable them to move toward more independence as they got ready for it.

Mrs. Dunbar talked to some of her neighbors and brought them over to the first block where the playstreet was now in operation. The thing that was startling was the fact that a trained professional

a row of children waiting to jump. One end was held by Mrs. Walters and the other by Mrs. Antonini—an unusual sight in this block and perhaps in any block.

Nobody who understands people would have claimed that the two Americans of different backgrounds, Negro and Italian, had overcome all their prejudice. But they worked together for a common cause: the children on the block, all children. Perhaps for the first time they had really got to know one another; they had become aware of the many things they had in common.

Nobody in the block had ever heard the



person had been hired by people of different colors and creeds, who together paid the man more salary a week than any of them received from their own work. There were also a few mothers on the block with him, helping with different age groups. Perhaps more important was the fact that right in the middle of the block there were two women holding a rope and

words "intercultural education," but, apparently, instead of talking about it, they were living it. It did not seem like anything special. The problems of organizing the children, keeping records of attendance, raising more money for equipment, planning for rainy days, were the things that were really important.

Mrs. Dunbar thought that she, too,

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could accomplish something like this in her block, but she told the worker at the Neighborhood Center that she did not think she would succeed in getting the Irish people from the other end of the block to join her and her friends. For the first few months, Mrs. Dunbar seemed right. Although some of the Negroes visited the Irish neighbors and were received with polite but cold formality, none of the latter came to the meetings at Mrs. Dunbar's or the Neighborhood office.

Then one day a truck speeding through the block injured Mrs. O'Connor's little girl. Everybody in the block saw the accident. Mary was playing on the sidewalk and her ball fell in the street. She dashed to get the ball, the driver slammed on the brakes, the people on the sidewalk screamed, and, one second later, the child was knocked unconscious, blood seeping from her forehead.

That night Mrs. Dunbar and her neighbors decided to send funny papers and candy to Mary in the hospital and a little note to Mrs. O'Connor. The child was hospitalized two weeks, and her mother sent a note of thanks to Mrs. Dunbar.

Now, when the small block committee decided to circulate a petition to the police asking for a "drive slowly" sign or a playstreet stanchion, Mrs. O'Connor welcomed them warmly and signed the petition, together with the Italian and Negro people in the block. A meeting was scheduled at the Neighborhood Center to plan for a visit to the police after all the signatures were in.

A week later, 16 people from the block gathered in the barrern store which is the Neighborhood Center in East Harlem. They came with baby carriages and their small children hanging on their mothers' skirts. There were Mrs. Dunbar and her friends; there were Mrs. O'Connor and Mrs. Petrillio. Mrs. Greenstein, of the green grocery, apologized for her hus-

band's absence. One of the men had been an air-raid warden and said that not even the war had succeeded in getting so many people together in one room at the same time from this block. The common danger of speeding traffic was closer to them than bombs falling in some distant city.

They elected Mrs. Dunbar speaker to talk to the captain and present the signatures.

At the later meeting in the police station, the Irish captain seated the group around a long table and listened. Mrs. Dunbar told their story and presented the petitions. She was nervous and said laughingly that she did not find it easy to come because, "I haven't done anything."

The captain laughed and the group smiled, and the atmosphere relaxed enough for the captain to ask whether there was anything else on their minds beyond the playstreet for their children.

One of the women who had not spoken before said she had a very important complaint. At great length and with much feeling, she explained her indignation over the sidewalk gambling that went on in their block day and night. "Even the children are learning to gamble for pennies."

Another woman said that only last night a neighbor's husband had gambled away a week's wages in one short evening. The rest of the group was silent, but the captain of the police picked up the suggestion with great concern. There was at this time a great deal of alertness in the police force against gambling because the city government had ordered a checkup after some irregularities had been reported. The captain promised to send plain-clothes men and police cars the very next day. The group thanked the captain for his interest and left.

Outside, when Mrs. Dunbar suggested they all go for a glass of beer, everyone agreed except the woman with the baby carriage and one other. The rest went into

the beer parlor and relived once more the scene at the police station. But Mrs. Dunbar was quiet until somebody asked her what was on her mind.

"I'll tell you," Mrs. Dunbar said. "Mrs. Hicks went back to the block mighty fast. I've a hunch that there's going to be trouble."

She was right. There was trouble. Plenty of it, for the next few days and even weeks. Mrs. Hicks had gone back and told her husband about the complaint against gambling, knowing that her husband liked to gamble and sometimes won.

The gamblers ganged up on Mrs. Dunbar, Mrs. O'Connor, Mrs. Petrillio, Mrs. Greenstein, and the others who had gone to the police station. A man grabbed Mrs. Dunbar at night and told her to move.



Mrs. Dunbar had known this man for many years. He was one of her Negro neighbors.

Mrs. O'Connor was held up by a young veteran, McCarthy, whose parents had come from the same Irish village as Mrs. O'Connor's folks.

Apparently gambling cut across color lines. The issue was not who was Italian or Irish or Negro, or even who was well

off, but what was of interest to everybody in this block. Mrs. Dunbar was determined to get an organization that embraced the majority of the people. In several discussions with the Neighborhood Center worker, she and her small group accepted the fact that the drive against gambling was not a uniting issue. It only stirred up a lot of ill will, and the gambling itself was as bad as ever.

"Why don't we drop the whole thing and go on to something more constructive?"

Mrs. Dunbar adjusted her glasses and sat up straight. "I want to say something," she announced. "I want to say that to me the welfare of the children on the block comes first, and I'll do anything not to kill the little block organization, our first chance to work together for the common good."

They agreed to work on a plan for a day nursery and planned a dance to tell everybody about it and to raise funds. And everybody came to the Christmas dance: Mr. Hicks and his gambling friends, Mrs. Dunbar and her group, Mrs. O'Connor, who brought Mary, well again by then, and Mr. and Mrs. Greenstein. Mrs. Petrillio raffled off a pair of nylon stockings and, when the dance was over, the group had money enough to open a bank account for the Good Neighbor Association and to work on their child-care program.

Other blocks were organized in time. One consisted of Puerto Rican people. They met every week, speaking Spanish and bringing their own strong coffee. Although there were some Negroes in this block, the Puerto Ricans did not seem to be able to talk to them.

One night there met at the Neighborhood Center store two block committees in different rooms, the Puerto Rican in the front room and an all-Negro in the back room. They were discussing their

own block projects and were practically unaware of the other block's presence because the doors were closed on either side.

The Neighborhood Center worker had received information about a reduction of fire engines in the area, affecting these two blocks and many others. Although the Fire Department seemed to have its own technical reasons for this removal, several newspapers were able to prove that the reduction would mean a delay in getting fire engines into the area from six to eight minutes. All the civic organizations had begun to send protest notices to the Fire Commissioner, and they counted on the block organizations to help.

The Neighborhood Center worker brought this request for help to each of the two blocks meeting that night. He found great indignation, expressed in Spanish in the front room and in English in the back. For the first time he asked the groups to meet together and plan some action. He asked each whether they would move into the other room, and while both were willing to have the other group come to them or to move themselves, there was much hesitation and silence. The worker chose the larger room in which the Puerto Ricans were meeting. The Negroes very slowly moved, one by one, through the open door into the front room. The worker pulled up chairs and the first ones sat off by themselves. Then, as more people came in from the back room, everybody had to get up and make room, and a shuffling of feet and chairs began and some laughing and some shaking of hands. When everyone had settled down, they sat as close together in this room as they lived together in the area. The Puerto Ricans did their best to speak English and one of the Negroes tried to speak Spanish.

They began by talking about the accomplishments of their blocks. Then the Neighborhood Center worker reported on

the newest danger: the reduction of fire fighting equipment. He told them they might not be strong enough yet to get those engines back, but that their joint action might perhaps have meaning nonetheless. They planned a leaflet to carry this fight to all the people and put their names on the same sheet of paper so they could be traced on a stencil and mimeographed. When they walked out of the Neighborhood Center office that night, they discovered that some of their children went to the same school and played on the same playground. They discovered they had very much in common.

These two blocks and the others organized in the area are part of an experiment. It is set up as an extension program of Union Settlement Association in New York City and is conducted in an area where 26,000 people live in tenement buildings, more than half of which were built over a half-century ago. Most of the rents are under \$30. All the people live in overcrowded, cramped quarters, and the area has in it all the problems that can be found in any other tenement district in the country.

The purpose of the experiment is to determine to what extent ordinary people in a deprived urban area can be enabled to grow individually, as well as in groups, and to what extent they can take responsibility and effect changes in their environment. Knowing that an organization can be only as good as the individuals within it, the main emphasis is on helping individuals grow within themselves and in their relationships to one another.

In order for people to discover that they count, we avoid using so-called leading citizens and work with grass-roots people only, meeting with them on their own problems or those of their community.

The methods used are the same as in all good social work. Workers are concerned with finding out whether the sci-

ence of mental hygiene and the faculties of psychiatry, group work, case work, and community organization can be used not only to help the individual adjust to a sick society but to direct his energies together with others to change the conditions which have caused many of his problems.

The experiment is conducted with two full-time workers; a full-time secretary; an average of three postgraduate students from the New York School of Social Work placed in our agency for field work for two quarters (21 hours per week) in partial fulfillment of the Master of Science degree; two or three volunteers who give an average of ten hours a week; and one or two undergraduate students on the same basis. Since people in our experiment are not used for organization but organization for people, the main job is with individuals; hence highly trained workers with enough assistance for the numerous details are needed.

The experiment is now a little more than a year old—barely in the toddler stage—and while we are proud parents, we hesitate to predict the successful future that we all wish for it. We can venture only a few tentative conclusions about possible values. The people seem to have gained a sense of self-respect and of participation in working for a better community for their families, replacing the apathy formerly so prevalent in the area. Through conducting activities for the benefit of the children of the block, they have developed a better understanding of their own children. They have had an experience in democratic leadership foreign to them before in their political and economic relationships. In the area itself, civic accomplishments have been brought about that city officials had tried for years to get the people to do. Better inter-racial relations have resulted. A sense of pride has developed. Instead of the former

attitude of "When I get enough money, I'm going to move away," now there is knowledge that people can do something about the things which bother them, that the place to begin is in their own homes and local neighborhoods: "Our block" or "our committee" did this, they say with pride.

New methods are being developed in locating and drawing out indigenous leadership and in using the geographic unit as a basis for organization. We are keeping careful day-by-day records to use as a basis for evaluation of the experiment, and, at a later date, when more experience has been gained, we hope to publish the findings. At this point, nobody is in a position to say whether it is possible to accomplish in a broad area the things so far achieved in a few groups only. Even the workers at the Neighborhood Center and Union Settlement are sometimes skeptical, but unless workers in the field of human relations have faith in ordinary people, they cannot continue to do their work and sleep quietly, aware of all the limitations and dangers to a people's movement that threaten from all sides. It is faith in ordinary people that keeps us going. And perhaps this is the most important factor in our courage to face the challenges that lie ahead.

*Dr. Rudolph Wittenberg came to the block organization experiment after ten years of experience in various phases of social work: child guidance, psychiatric and family case work, group work, and the training of group workers. He is on the faculty of the New School for Social Research and is consultant for a number of agencies in the East. His latest book, *So You Want to Help People*, a mental hygiene primer for group leaders, will soon be published by the Association Press.*

The illustrations are by Miné Okubo.

OPPORTUNITY FOR AMERICA

WILLIAM S. BERNARD

SEVERAL weeks ago the second anniversary of the liberation of Europe was celebrated. We celebrated this anniversary. What about the people, the displaced persons we liberated two long years ago from Buchenwald and Belsen, from Auschwitz and Thereisenstadt? For many of these, true liberation has yet to come.

You and I in our comparative plenty, fed and housed and clothed, have been strangely apathetic—almost callous—about their fate. True, we meet to talk about them occasionally, but as though they were a different species of human beings.

Take the very term “displaced persons.” It is an efficient term, an impersonal term, an almost cold-blooded term for 850,000 people. We don’t call them poor people, hungry people, or homeless people, people in despair over their future. We call them displaced persons, which conveys none of that to us. And so we can more easily forget that they are poor, homeless, and sick at heart.

But who are they? Suppose you and I were sitting in a displaced persons camp tonight, what would we be like?

Our clothing would be mismatched and shabby, our food monotonous, our hands idle, our lives as drab as the barracks in which we live. Some of us would be Poles, Estonians, or Latvians; some Lithuanians, Yugoslavs, or Ukrainians. Four out of five would be Christian; one in five would be Jewish. Women and children would

account for more than half of us—and among the 150,000 children, half would be under six years old. Our children, born in camps, would still be living in camps. Home would be an unfamiliar word to them; privacy, one completely unknown.

Yet despite our bitterness and disillusion, we have managed to keep our camp communities alive. Our camps are models of self-government, practicing the democracy which the rest of the world preaches. We have established schools, and our children, too, are learning democracy. We work with our hands, with the meager materials given us by the Army, UNRRA, and the voluntary agencies. We have established orchestras and clinics, theaters and repair shops. If we could forget the nightmare past of which we are the victims, the barren present, and the seemingly hopeless future, we could be a useful addition to any community.

What of our future? Why don’t we go back to our native lands? We cannot go home again to the villages and communities where our families and friends were tortured and killed before our eyes. We cannot go home to a land made cold and hostile by a totalitarian philosophy. We who have been persecuted for our religion or our politics know the fate that awaits us. Some of us would face first police surveillance, then arrest, and then the labor battalions. For others, there would simply be death. Again, we who for so many years have lived in fear want our children to grow up free from fear—

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free citizens in a democratic community.

What hope is there for us? UNRRA, which has fed and clothed and housed us for two years, goes out of existence in June. The IRO, which was to have assumed responsibility for us, exists only in paper plans and resolutions. And no people's lives can be rebuilt with paper promises. What can bring about our true liberation?

The only long-range solution for these displaced persons is resettlement in friendly lands. America, as the strongest, the richest, and the staunchest proponent of democracy throughout the world, has a deep moral obligation to take its fair share of them. Napoleon once remarked that America was a fortunate country, for she could profit by Europe's follies. Here is an opportunity for America to profit richly by taking into our land these people who ask so little and who could give so much. Here, too, is an opportunity to make our practices square with our professions of democratic faith. We cannot escape the responsibility that world leadership has imposed on us. We will do our world position irreparable harm if we bar these people from our country. No nation, and especially the United States, can maintain good public relations and sell its ideals of democracy to the world if it fails to practice the ideals it wants to sell. The world is always ready to try a new product, particularly if the package is gaudy and colorful—the gold swastika of Nazism or the red star of Communism.

We must bring some of these people here. To this end, a group of thoughtful Americans have banded together to form the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons (39 East 36th Street, New York 16). The Committee is representative of the entire country, and it includes people of all faiths and persuasions. The organizations that endorse it include the Fed-

eral Council of the Churches of Christ in America, The National Catholic Welfare Conference, the major Jewish agencies, the National Conference of Union Labor Legionnaires, the American Federation of Labor, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, to mention just a few; and they and all the others have made as their common cause the admission of a fair share of these displaced persons to the United States.

A bill has been introduced in Congress by which we can discharge this obligation. On April 1, William G. Stratton of Illinois introduced H.R. 2910, a bill to admit 100,000 displaced persons to this country annually for four years. The total figure, 400,000 people, would mean an increase of three-tenths of one per cent in our population. It would not relax our regular protective restrictions whereby all immigrants are screened for health, for good moral character, for economic status, and for subversive ideas. It would not relax the barriers; it would not lower our standards. This bill is an *emergency measure of temporary duration only*. It would not in any way change existing immigration laws.

Although America, in the name of humanitarianism and the ideals we profess, can do nothing less than admit this mere trickle of the victims of World War II, there are those in our country who would oppose even this small gesture. They are the pessimists who cry that the pioneer days are over; that the United States can no longer absorb immigration. They are the people who would have us believe that in all our 3,000 miles from coast to coast, neither our cities nor our plains, neither our factories nor our farms, can find room for an additional population of three-tenths of one per cent. They are the people who would have us believe that America has stopped growing, that we have lost heart.

Then there are those who say that these displaced persons will never be good Americans—that they are Communists. It is precisely because they are not Communists that they refuse to go back to Communist-dominated countries. It is precisely because they will not live and work for totalitarianism that they find themselves with no place to go. The answer is as simple as that. From their long, bitter experience, they have a fresh appreciation of what democracy means, far clearer and sharper than some of our complacent citizens, than some of our professional patriots.

Then there are the “yes, but” people—cautious souls who say, “Yes, but what about housing, and what about jobs? Won’t the displaced persons compete with Americans for scarce jobs and scarcer housing?” These people are best answered by the facts.

Refugees who have come here in the past ten years, far from taking jobs away from Americans, have provided employment for thousands of citizens. A survey made by Professor Maurice Davie reveals that in 715 firms established by refugees, over two-thirds of the employees were older Americans.

An occupational skills survey conducted by UNRRA last year reveals that 90,000 of the displaced persons are agricultural workers—a new source of manpower for midwest farms confronted with an acute shortage of labor. Farmers can and will house any workers they can employ. There are 20,000 housemaids, 4,000 trained nurses and 2,000 other health workers for the hospitals which are searching desperately for nurses to staff closed wards and to supplement their overworked personnel.

These people would not only bring their democratic convictions to this country but skills that would enrich our

national economy. Not only would we be gaining useful citizens, but all of us, whether we are trained economists or not, can realize that their coming is a sound financial investment. Every single day now it costs \$610,000 to maintain the displaced persons. Figure out how much that totals in two years. And what does that money do? It only maintains them in camps where they sit in enforced idleness, deteriorating in mind and body, where they gain nothing and contribute nothing. Bring some of them here, where they can find jobs, support themselves, and stop this drain on the American economy.

On every ground, whether for humanitarianism, or for economic considerations, or to maintain our world political position, it is imperative that we admit a fair share of these displaced persons to the United States. It is imperative that H.R. 2910 be passed. It is imperative that it be done now. The refugees bring an opportunity for America to help make lasting peace. That opportunity may knock only once.

As long ago as 1798, Thomas Jefferson expressed America’s attitude toward displaced persons when he said: “Shall we refuse the unhappy fugitive from distress that hospitality which even the savages of the wilderness extended to our forefathers arriving in this land? Shall the oppressed find no asylum on this globe?”

William S. Bernard is secretary of the newly organized Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons, of which Earl G. Harrison, former Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization, is chairman. Mr. Bernard is a specialist in ethnic and minority problems and has taught at Yale and the University of Colorado. He is also executive director of the National Committee on Immigration Policy.

EACH MAN IS AN ISLAND

JOHN CASWELL SMITH, JR.

THE LETTER lay on the desk in front of me as I looked out of my window at Boston's summer heat and the motionless, drooping trees. An invitation to make a speech on race relations is a long way from my idea of having fun; but in the middle of summer, the cool, countryside of upstate New York was not to be considered lightly. But a speech on race relations!

I have been a social worker for more than fifteen years, and during all those years I have been asked to make speeches on one phase or another of what is commonly called the "Negro question." I am seldom asked to speak on any other topic. I confess to getting tired of it, even bored. Yet here was the letter from Hudson Shore Labor School, asking that I come up to West Park and lead some discussions—on race relations.

I am not noble. I will not say that the idea of a long weekend in the country was not a factor in my decision to accept the invitation to be a guest lecturer; but there was something else. There was my knowledge of the validity of the setting into which I was being invited. In her capacity as Director of the School, Margaret Wood has the best possible policy on racial matters: she doesn't have any policy. Rhett Arter was appointed Education Director simply because she knows a great deal about Workers' Education, and I doubt if the fact that she is a Negro was even discussed by the Board of Directors when she was being considered for the appointment.

Here, then, was an atmosphere in which one could breathe. This was not to be one of those halting, awkward meetings in which the fact of my brown skin at close range would be a new experience for the leader of the group. No hail-fellow-well-met would be meeting me at the railroad station, showing me what a helluva swell guy he is by inviting me to dinner at his home. Even if I had not known the kind of people I would meet at Hudson Shore, the tone of the letter itself would have reassured me: "... , we do not want any of your usual speeches nor anything like the traditional approaches. In fact, we are not entirely sure of what it is we do want.

"We know we have about sixty people here from all kinds of backgrounds: whites and Negroes (from both South and North), several religious faiths and at least a half-dozen nationality groupings. We have two girls just over from England, union and non-union workers, college under-grads, people who have finished high school and others who have completed not more than sixth grade. We have men enrolled (4) for the third year of the School's history; our youngest 'inhabitant' is nineteen, the oldest is just over forty.

"So much for variety.

"Our main interest is the fact that there is some tension in our atmosphere that makes it difficult for us to teach and for our students to learn. Our people are 'polite' to one another when they don't feel polite. Our Negro students are not

relaxed with our white students, but they are straining every effort to be on their best behavior; our white students are equally confused about living so close to Negroes, but are being too much the 'good sports' about it. In short, we've got an atmosphere of phony friendliness, the artificial part of which shines through occasionally—whenever somebody's 'guard' slips for a moment.

"This is what we want from you: we want you to lead some discussions with our 'A' group. There are twenty-three of them and they are the only ones who will have been with us for the complete season of six weeks. The other people come for periods of two weeks and leave, but we feel our chances for success are possibly better with those who have been together longer. We want you to draw out some of the hostility and confusion which we are certain is being 'hidden,' and make as constructive a use of it as possible, so that our people here can be more comfortable with one another. We are even trying to find out whether such a thing is possible to achieve!

"There is nothing very new in our setup. We've had all the same kinds of people and problems before. We've tried to get at this thing before by lectures, projects, dramatic skits, etc., and feel that all of this has been a groping kind of effort. We haven't accomplished much by way of changing attitudes, and we confess that, in one instance, attitude was impaired rather than helped. But we want to keep trying. We want, this year, to find out whether any progress can be made by applying certain case work principles to a group. Will you help?"

How could one turn down such honesty, except as he felt the task too difficult? How could one not accept the challenge, the opportunity, to work in such a "laboratory?"

II

The class in English, which was my scene of action at Hudson Shore Labor School, teaches functional English. The education of workers in industry requires that they be given material of practical use to them when they return to their jobs and the responsibilities involved in good citizenship. They are taught how to read newspapers and to know something about editorial policies. Elementary rules of parliamentary procedure come into the course so that when workers return to their union meetings they will know more about participating in them. There are other items: poster-making, advertising techniques, even simple letter-writing. The college students who take the courses are usually sociology-economics majors, interested in teaching-techniques as well as the things they can learn, firsthand, of the problems, personalities, and attitudes of workers direct from the shops. Besides this, they learn much subject matter that is not taught in their respective colleges. Throughout the English course there is an emphasis on the use of words, and a demonstration of what is accomplishable by their skillful use.

On my first day in the class, we began by talking about words used to create stereotyped ideas. From this point, it was a simple transition to get into a discussion of what is involved in the whole idea of stereotypes. Somebody said a stereotype was like a cartoon, a device by which the distinguishing characteristics of a person, or a group, were exaggerated; for instance, a cartoonist would draw a picture of Roosevelt emphasizing teeth, eyeglasses, and a cigarette holder, and so on. Someone else contributed the idea that these were used in both "good" or "bad" ways. I asked for examples.

We were seated at a long table, in fact several tables placed end to end so that there was room for all twenty-three students. A white girl on my left pointed out that the United States was represented in cartoons by Uncle Sam. Joan, one of our English girls, said the same about John Bull representing her country. I furnished the comment that sometimes Negroes were pictured stealing chickens and that this gave people the idea that all Negroes steal, chickens preferred. A Negro girl on my right scowled quickly and seemed displeased with me for introducing this item. I went back and picked up the remark made earlier about the "characteristics of groups," and asked what some of these characteristics were. We evolved a definition which said, in effect, that "characteristics" were the things that showed what race people belonged to. The inaccuracy of this had to be passed for the moment. I asked again for examples.

Mike, a young veteran whose parents were born in Greece, said, "Well, you take me. I'm a Greek. Anybody can tell I'm a Greek!" There was considerable feeling in his voice, and he was trying to mask it with a kind of bravado. I spoke to a girl on my left.

"Sue," I asked, "did you know Mike is a Greek?"

She flushed. "Well, no. I . . ."

"You did too, because I told you last week!" Mike exclaimed.

"That doesn't count," I replied, "because you told her. Besides, we were talking about races, and you tell me about Greeks. Are Greeks a race of people?" There was not a unanimous agreement. With more discussion we decided that this problem could be cleared up, to some extent, by getting some reading material from the library after class. For the time being, it would serve our purposes to realize that to be a Greek means that

one was born in Greece, of parents who were natives of that country; that if one is born in the United States, he is an American, etc. "Race," we decided, meant some reference to one of the three great groups of mankind: Mongoloid, Negroid, Caucasoid. Understandable frowns of confusion spread over some faces, but nothing was said. I tried a different tack.

"What do we call the inhabitants of Scotland?"

"Scotch! Scotchmen!" At least a third of the class replied promptly and with great confidence. I winked at Kitty, our other British student. "Shall I say how wrong that is?" I asked. She nodded.

"Well," I continued, "I lived in England for a couple of years, and I discovered that the only thing Scotch in Scotland is the whiskey; that the people there would not like it if they were called 'Scotch.'"

Anna, a Negro girl, frowned. "I always called 'em Scotch," she said, "and I never meant any harm. What do you call them?" I signalled to Kitty to give the answer.

"'Scots-man,' or 'Scots-woman,'" she said, enunciating very carefully. I continued with a confession of my own.

"A friend of mine once told me that I was insulting his Chinese friends every time I used the expression, 'Chinaman,' and I had to learn to say, 'a Chinese' or 'some Chinese' when referring to people from China."

The group began to tighten a little. Some, possibly abashed at their own trains of thought, looked into their laps. Mike spoke up again. "Guys in the Navy used to call me 'gee-gee,'" he said, "but I didn't get sore. I just laughed it off."

"What does 'gee-gee' mean?" I asked.

"It's G-G for 'Greasy Greek,'" he said.

"Perhaps you didn't mind it, Mike, but I don't think you liked those who said

it very well, did you?" I explored. He dropped his glance for an instant.

"No," he said uncertainly, "but you gotta laugh those things off."

"You mean then, that it is an insult, that you wouldn't want people to call you a name like that all the time. Isn't that so?" The class was listening intently, each individual, I was sure, thinking about the derogatory terms applied to his particular group. They virtually nodded along with Mike, in agreement with my statement.

I continued, "Then the fact is, that if somebody calls any of us a name, it does hurt, but to keep from letting anyone know it hurts it may seem to us that the simplest thing to do is to laugh it off. Do we all agree with that?" There was a general nodding of heads. Mike was blushing.

"Sure," he said, "it's like the people down South, the way they talk about the colored people."

I turned to Mary, a white girl from Alabama. "What about that, Mary?" I asked. "Do you agree with Mike?"

The two Negro girls, sitting side by side, looked eager, and it seemed to me that they were saying to themselves, "Ah! At last! He's going to let her have it!" Mary reddened. "Yes," she said, "but of course I don't agree with all the things people down there say about the—er, colored folks." She looked fleetingly across the table.

I spoke to Anna again. "You live in Chicago, don't you, Anna?" I asked.

"Yes." She was surprised that I had shifted attention from the white girl so soon.

"That's not in the South, is it?"

"No." There was general laughter.

"Have you ever heard any bad words used about Negroes in Chicago?"

"Yes. Yes, I sure have!"

"Well, then we can't say that only

people in the South use them, can we?"

The class began to catch on. Mary relaxed a little to find that the idea was emerging that all racial "sin" did not reside solely in the South. She had been so preoccupied earlier with her own knowledge of the South, and some of her own feelings of guilt about it, that the simple answer had not easily occurred to her.

"Is there more prejudice in the South than in the North?" I asked.

There was a ready answer to this, a general agreement that the South is "worse" than the North.

"What do we mean by the word 'prejudice'?"

It was necessary to use the blackboard for all the definitions that ensued: "hatefulness," "being against somebody," "discrimination," and so on. With further discussion, we got around to the fact that prejudice means, essentially, pre-judgment, deciding beforehand what a thing or a person is like without having personal experience with it. We decided that there could be prejudice *in favor of* as well as *against* something. There were more examples. I contributed one of my own, for purposes I would have later on: I have never eaten any spinach, yet I will not even taste it because I think I will not like it. We went back to the word "discrimination" because the class had used the two words interchangeably. "Discrimination," we decided, was like "prejudice" in the sense that it could be in favor of or against; that it simply meant to select, as a matter of taste or choice; that by the act of discrimination we set aside people or things and select an individual or a group or an object and reject that which does not fall within the range of choices of which we approve. We gave enough time to this to divest the words of the purely negative symbolism which they had for all our students, and to give them

the flexibility of which they are capable.

After getting our language straight, we went back to the South. In about five minutes we had arrived at the knowledge that there was not a great deal of difference between Northerners and Southerners in their susceptibility to prejudice. Soon, we were fairly certain that all the people in America were very much the same and that we could not apply any terms to any one group of them that did not apply, generally, to all the others.

This had come about at some emotional expense. The students were laboriously giving up old, familiar concepts and it did not make them comfortable. I don't think they liked me very well, because I was the source of their disturbance. There was little, if anything, written in their notebooks; and when the bell sounded, they were more than ready to quit the room. They filed out without very much noise and without anyone lagging behind to ask questions. It is my opinion that they were afflicted with a deal of "indigestion" and that they needed time to let some of the new ideas sink in and find a resting place.

I began the second session by saying that we had opened a great many questions without settling any of them very definitely and that, while we would continue to discuss words and the ideas that surrounded them, we would save some time for answering questions on the third and last day.

As a lead-off for discussion, I said I had noticed that we were all interested in the various names or designations by which people were distinguished, such as "Chinese," "Scotsman," etc., and that I had noticed people saying both "Negro" and "colored," and I wondered if anybody was sure which was right. None of the white students volunteered any answer, but the two Negro girls spoke im-

mediately. But I heard both "Negro!" and "colored!" Important in this was the fact that their bursts were accompanied by facial expressions which were belligerent, bespeaking the many times they had heard the misuse of one of the terms. The non-Negroes in the room were tense, possibly anxious to find out for themselves how to keep from making mistakes. I shrugged my shoulders.

"I've had problems with this myself," I said, "and that's why I asked the question. I think it is one of the things that makes white people timid in their relations with colored people. I've been criticized for using 'colored' and I've been criticized for saying 'Negro,' and I used to find it confusing." The class looked surprised, but the Negro girls were still waiting to be "shown."

"Whenever it is necessary to use one of these words, in order not to confuse an issue, I try to use whatever term seems to be preferred by the people I am with. But, actually, it seems to me that 'colored' is a general term, meaning 'to have color.' Consequently, Negroes are not the only people who are colored. But that isn't all. To refer to all people of African descent as 'Negro' seems to me to confuse Americans of such descent with, let us say, Negroes who were born in Africa of African parents. Yesterday, we decided that Mike is an American because he was born in America. Also, there are Americans whom we call Negroes who are as blonde and fair as our Peggy here. It's confusing, because Americans don't know how to talk accurately about each other. We have a lot of words and phrases that don't really mean anything, such as 'mixed-blood' to indicate that a person is the product of two different racial groups; but the blood of all people is the same. For me, the main point is that even if we were to find a word for those Americans we now call Negroes—a word that

would satisfy everybody—of what use would it be? Why does there have to be some special word to designate one group of people?"

Lillian, the Negro girl in the class who was from the South, said that "down South" one had to be definitely one thing or the other so that segregation laws could be enforced, and to keep Negroes from voting. One of the northern white girls said it was unconstitutional to keep anybody from voting, and was laughed down. Bernice, another of the southern white girls, explained to her that many unconstitutional things were done in the South and added that there were also white people there who were not allowed to vote. She spoke with authority and a tremor of indignation in her voice.

Mike, with customary swagger, said he guessed we'd have to fight the Civil War all over again and looked over at Mary with a gleam in his eye. She blushed, but smiled. The "attack" was turning upon the South again and I felt that Mary needed rescue. "By the way," I asked, "who won the Civil War, anyway?"

A joyous chorus of "The North!" rose from northern throats. Mary responded to the cry, trying to be a good sport about a very tender subject. "Aw," she said, "we could've beat you-all. We just got tired and quit, that's all."

Derisive laughter, not without its good-natured overtone, rose again. Yet here, in miniature, was that old, traditional picture of the self-righteous North, punishing a "sinful" South; here again, was the triumphant knight-in-shining-armor, freeing the slaves.

"I'm not so sure as all of you seem to be," I said. "I sure do wish all Americans could forget that part of our history. The North, to my mind, didn't win the war because they were better fighters, or because they were smarter. I think the North won because of their superior in-

dustrial resources. I think a manufacturing nation, with coal and steel under its control, can always win a war with an agricultural nation. Incidentally, why was it that the North didn't have a lot of slaves?"

There were several moralistic answers to my question, but when I mentioned that perhaps climate was a factor, it seemed easily accepted. We went on to suggest that, if New England's climate had more nearly matched that of the hot zones of Africa and of the United States, there might have been many more Africans in the North during the slavery period. Yet the difference, it was revealed, could not be entirely explained through climate. We chopped our minds loose from the too-easy generalities and explored a variety of contributing elements. It was new information for some that there had been Southerners who were opposed to slavery. We talked about the Irish indentured servants brought to this country, and pointed out that many of them were about as badly off as though they had been slaves, that all of them were distinctly not kept in the South. We spoke of the great waves of immigration in the 19th century, bringing people from many different countries. Our union members saw, perhaps more clearly than the others, that such matters could breed prejudice in the native, white wage earners because of the threats to their sense of wage security and the retarding effect they could have upon organizing labor to the point of effective collective bargaining.

But most important, the point was made again that what seemed like clearly distinguishable characteristics between Northerners and Southerners was more apparent than real. We could leave the details to the classes and special lecturers which dealt with labor problems and economics. For now, it would suffice to

see to it that the South was not "white-washed" nor the North left with a clean bill of health. We saw that, basically, we were dealing with common, human traits and their responses to economic pressures, competition, new inventions—in the big, gangling nation of the 19th century, which had not yet learned legislative techniques to control the race for power and profits.

We discovered that we had a deep sense of regret that any groups of Americans should have found it necessary to kill one another in order to "solve" problems that might have been settled with less violent methods. Even more important, for my own immediate purpose, Mary was saved from being a symbolic target and scapegoat for all the injustices and hostility that have sprung from American error in the matter of race relations. Now Mary only lived in the South; she was not Jefferson Davis and she was not a slaveholder! She was a person and, like the rest of us, was trying to arrive at an understanding of the elements in American life, past and present, which make for confusion and strife.

But Great Britain was yet to be heard from. Joan said she couldn't understand the American prejudices, that in England the American Negro soldiers had got on quite well with the English people. She had felt somewhat aloof from our discussion of American affairs; but now somebody raised a question about the 400 million Indians in India and the entire British colonial system. After a while, Joan was not so sure that her country was free from racial prejudice. Later on, she was to admit, "I remember, now, that at home in London I have to go to work by way of a section where a lot of dark-skinned people live—Colonials y'know—and I confess I should've been very disturbed if, by some chance, I should've found one of them in my home

one evening—say, talking with my parents, or invited to dinner. I suppose some of them might've been quite nice, too. Never thought about it much, till now."

As in the case of Mary, the important conclusion reached was that Joan and Kitty were not personally responsible for the inequalities that have grown out of Britain's management of its empire. However, before Joan had got around to her relaxed admission of having prejudices against people, we had had to learn that to be Jewish was to be a member of a religious group, not a "race," and that one could not tell "Jewishness" simply by looking at a person, any more than you could tell "Baptistness" in this way. This was exploded without much heat. Our class was beginning to be helpful with one another and to not be defensive or punitive whenever someone brought out an inaccurate idea which he or she had harbored for a long time in the form of fact.

Too, I was learning to do less talking and we were all learning that the amount of knowledge we did not have was even more enormous than we had supposed it to be. Just before the bell sounded for lunch, a question came up about *liking* people of different cultural backgrounds. I returned to my earlier remarks about spinach.

"I admitted yesterday that I am prejudiced against spinach," I said, "and I think it's my constitutional right not to like the stuff." There were broad grins. "You can tell me as long as you like that it has fine qualities, that it has vitamins, what it does for Popeye, and all that. I'm still not going to eat it."

The young veteran on my right had become very chummy by now. We had sat up late the night before talking about his problem of adjusting to civilian life. "You tell 'em, Smitty!" he exclaimed.

But Mike wasn't satisfied. "But so

COMMON GROUND

what!" he said. "We're talking about people, and you're talking about spinach." He had scored a point.

"Well, I only mean that, to a certain extent, you can apply the idea to people. For instance, I'm a Negro, but I certainly don't *like* all the Negroes I know any more than all of them like me. There are some people in my own family that I don't like as well as some people who aren't even related to me."

"But that's the wrong attitude," Mike persisted. "Maybe if you tried to understand them, and had 'em around your house more, you'd get to like 'em better. Like we're trying to understand more about people here. You take when I go home, and I talk to some of the fellows about having colored workers in the union. You know what some of them are going to say. Shouldn't I try to tell 'em that colored people are all right?"

"I think there are two questions there, Mike: *accepting* any group in our society and *liking* them. I think a lot depends on which job we try to do first. It's all right for me to be prejudiced against spinach, but I think I ought to mind my own business when it comes to the point of what you do about it. I think I'm way outside my personal rights if I try to stop you from eating it. With people, I think it's all right for me to be 'choosy' about who comes to my house; but I don't think I have a right to do them an injustice with my attitude. I don't think I ought to go so far as to keep them from getting a job in the place where I work, or from renting an apartment in the building where I live. But if you insist that I've got to *like* everybody, then I think I am going to defend my point of view more vigorously than ever. I think you'll make more progress with the fellows in your union if you show them that it weakens their strength as an organized group to keep any group of people out-

side of it; but I don't think you'll get very far if you tell them they've got to like everybody in the organization."

"But after they get working together, don't you think they would like each other?" Mike was not arguing now. He was voicing some of the feelings of all the others.

"Sure. That may very well be. I think there'd be some colored workers they'd like, and some others they wouldn't like just as there are some white fellows they don't like right now. But that comes *after* they're in. The first step is to make sure you don't defeat yourself by arguing off the point at the outset."

The class was becoming animated and everyone wanted to ask questions; but the hour had ended. I assured them that the next day's session would be devoted entirely to questions. Then we all went to lunch.

On the way to the dining room, the students talked rapidly and volubly with one another. The three teachers who had been auditing the class were not sure whether any change of attitude was taking place but we were all sure that something important was happening because there were copious signs that the members of the group were considerably more comfortable with each other. The teacher of Dramatics felt she would know more that afternoon when she would meet the same group for the play they were creating, writing the lines themselves as each situation was acted out. For myself, I knew I was having a new experience, but exactly what it was became clear only much later.

The next morning's class contributed more of the "key" pieces.

Mary led off with the first question. "I guess everybody knows, by now, that I'm from the South," she began, "but I've got some questions about what to do about

my feelings. When I first came to this school, it was my first time in the North. First night I got here, I almost went back home. I hadn't realized how hard it would be till I got here, and when I found out I had to sleep in the same room with some colored girls, my stomach turned over. I didn't want it to, but it did. I never said anything about it till now, because I guess I figured I could make out for six weeks, but now I want to do something about the way I feel inside. I can understand all the things we've been talking about—with my mind—but what I want to know is: what do I do about what happens down here?" She indicated the general region of her stomach.

I was not prepared for such frankness, especially when the two girls she had reference to were sitting across the table from her. I looked quickly in their direction but found them as relaxed as anybody else in the room. I made a note of the question in my small notebook and asked Mary's neighbor for her question, which turned out to be equally startling.

"It's the Jewish people that have always bothered me," she said. "I've never seen many colored people—there aren't many in my town, but—" This time I found the Jewish students unperturbed, and all around the table it was much the same. The questions were mainly asking "why" about the things we feel inside of us, and the "how" of getting rid of them so one could feel less uncomfortable and get along better with one's fellows. One girl asked if accepting the new ideas which ran counter to what they had been taught by their parents meant that their mothers and fathers were wrong, if it meant that their parents had lied to them. Another said it was simple enough, after you had had help, to figure out some things for yourself, but what could you do about your friends, and so on. It was a most unusual situation for me. Here were

twenty-three people asking honest questions, making honest statements about themselves and others, which ordinarily would have brought forth only hostile retorts, and uppermost in their attitudes seemed only the awareness that they had many confusions in common as well as a common desire to do something about it. And the next move was mine!

With no little trepidation, I began an impromptu lecture which would probably have caused consternation in academic circles, especially a classroom in psychology. I began by drawing an oval on the blackboard. This was to represent the brain. One-third of the oval was divided off and labeled "C" for conscious thoughts, the remainder labeled "H" for habit and/or unconscious thoughts. I talked about the processes by which deep-seated habits are formed, and showed the necessity for repetition in order to get an act or an idea to the point where we could make use of it without having to think consciously about it; how these processes were, in many cases, necessary so that mind and body could work more efficiently together, and how it was that we needed the mechanism of habit so that the mind's work could be properly distributed. It was shown that we could, for example, eventually learn to manage the muscles of the body for the important task of walking and thus leave the mind free to do some other thing which required more immediate concentration.

I pointed out that our notions about people came from getting these ideas through all our senses so often that after a while we accepted them without very much thought, and that breaking a habit is as difficult as abandoning a well-shoveled path in the snow in favor of striking out in a new direction through the drifts, even when one is anxious to do away with an old idea and to reconstruct his habits of thinking.

We see motion pictures (I said) which show Negroes as clowns and servants, but never as doctors, lawyers, steam fitters, hotel clerks, or locomotive engineers, and our minds record this omission in such a way as to make us habitually reject the idea of Negroes being anything except that which the stereotype suggests. We hear ill-mannered jokes and specially slanted stories about the thrift of Scotsmen, the cunning of Jewish merchants, the pugnaciousness of the Irish; and since these people are like all the other people in the world, it sometimes happens that we see Scotsmen who are unduly thrifty, we see Jewish merchants who are sharp dealers, and we see Irish people involved in fights. We don't notice when others do these things because the "labels" have not been so securely fastened nor so sharply embossed, and consequently we are frequently tricked into believing that the fiction is fact.

Our parents, our teachers, and even our preachers—often unwittingly, it may be—pass these ideas on to us in their relationships with us because they too are fallible human beings and have "learned" them through the mores and the general practices of various communities. We want to be approved by our friends, and we tend to adopt the thinking of our friends and others in the community whose approval we seek. We could change more easily if they would change, but it takes real courage to go against the crowd. It takes more courage if one is not sure of the facts and his feelings about the facts, and it takes something different from courage if one is not even aware that his attitudes are erroneous and his actions unjust.

I said that everyone had to live in a "climate" which is favorable for the changing of ideas and behaviors, and that that was what we were trying to provide at Hudson Shore Labor School. I cited

the case of Mary and praised her for the courage I knew it must have taken to express her ideas about Negroes in the presence of those of us who were Negroes, and I said that I felt that a part of the job of helping her to get rid of that sensation in her tummy was getting it outside where it already was; that I suspected that since it *had* got outside she would have an increasing success in achieving "comfort"; I was sure she could never have quite the same amount of discomfort as long as she was interested in her own progress. There was commendation for the others, too, for the way in which they had allowed each other to be honest.

Yet, I pointed out, there was no real magic in the world. It had taken a great many days and months for us to get our ideas manufactured and we were not going to get rid of them entirely in any one lecture, or in any period of a few days or weeks. We would all be challenged again and again in the days to come and we would be faced with difficult decisions and different confusions.

In all, the "lecture" consumed about forty minutes, and at its close the hush that had settled over the group continued for a moment or two. There had been deep, relieving sighs all during the period and a general, physical relaxing against chair backs. Most classes of this sort will applaud lightly at the close of the last meeting. This one did not. There were no questions; only smiles here and there. One or two said, "Thank you," and I remember feeling uncertain and a little embarrassed. It was only later that confirmation came that what had happened was a good thing, that the silence in the students had meant "consent" and the achievement of an unfamiliar comfort which they wore willingly, but with which they had not yet developed a sense of close kinship.

III

There is not room here to relate the set of facts which, seen from the standpoint of perspective, gave evidence of a marked alteration of attitudes, nor to tell about those changes in individual behaviors as sensed by other members of the faculty who had known almost nothing of the content of what we were doing in the English class. The Dramatics teacher did report getting more realistic lines written into her play and a spectacular switch from stilted, protective line-writing to an earthy, viable resolution of conflict in the eventual product.

I have omitted much. I have not told how the three faculty members who had sat in the room got disturbed at the unexpectedly large amount of deep-seated prejudice that was being revealed in their students during the second session, nor of the interesting conference we had to get at their apprehensions and their need to become more accepting of their students' imperfections. I have not told the whole story of how, on several occasions, the Education Director had to let me know that I was talking too much and not allowing the class to talk fully enough; and I have not said that the reason for this garrulousness was my own unsureness, at various points, of what to do next with what was happening. I cannot even tell of my second trip, at the urgent invitation of the "A" class to conduct a similar program with the newly-arrived "C" class, and its almost identical results.

At least one thing is certain: we were all learning. I, for instance, can never again be cavalier about race-relations discussions, for I returned to my work somewhat chastened, with a need for re-evaluating some of the elements in my own thinking about the method involved in programs of intercultural education,

even education itself in the broader aspects of its definition.

We were all convinced that, whatever one's point of view, he has to have an opportunity to express it without the fear that he will be struck by lightning—or a swiftly repressive public opinion. We knew that the social case worker's principle of "permissive listening" can be carried too far, and that "too far" means to permit confirmed, psychopathic hate-mongers like the Ku Klux Klan to go freely about the land fomenting inter-group trouble and violence. There has to be some kind of control, but not so much that one cannot get his confusions out into the open, where he can see them better, without losing status.

The optimum "temperature" has to be one in which the person who is *trying to learn* may be wrong without losing the esteem of his "right-thinking" colleagues, where one can discover for himself, personally and unvicariously, that there is truth, absolute and relative, to be found for the searching; it has to be a climate indeed where status is *gained* by the search for truth, even if a lie is brought to light in the process. This is involved in the best meaning of the word "tolerance." It is the dynamic, freedom-core of democracy and the democratic process. To exclude it from our method is as invalid as to remove it from the schoolhouse and the home; as to say that it is all wrong to allow a child his privilege of making errors without losing his place in the home and in the family.

Certainly, we saw that straight, factual information is a part of the educational process, but we saw, too, that knowledge is not enough to dispel emotional fabrics and figments. This is no profound discovery. The average layman knows this perfectly well; and it is a virtual cliché in the scientific world. The question one

raises is whether we have, universally enough, made practical use of our knowledge of this simple fact. We still continue, in many of our educational attempts at social change and enlightenment, to make our presentations chiefly to the intellect, and not enough to where Mary had her problem: in the stomach!

Margaret Halsey knew this when she wrote *Color Blind*. She had found, earlier, that getting people to talk democratically and to act up to their professed beliefs were two very different kinds of jobs to achieve. She knew that, in the proper conduct of a canteen, there had to be room for everybody's point of view to stand side-by-side with everyone's rights. She had to know how to define "rights" and how to apply her knowledge at the exact moments when she was faced with the outraged human material, armed as it was with its own conflicting view of "rights" and "justice," in the middle of the canteen's dance floor. I dare say it was not in some light, brilliant moment, but in the depths of fatigue and near-despair, that Margaret Halsey came upon some of the wisdom and sureness of conviction that pervade her writing.

Ours was a profoundly moving experience, yet no magic was worked. There was discovered no simple formula that will function as unerringly as the creation of water by mixing fixed proportions of hydrogen and oxygen. Yet, what did occur is, at least, a part of a social case work technique that is well-known in the profession. A case worker knows, for instance, that she sometimes has to let the person she is trying to help express verbal hostility against society, against a parent or a spouse: *in order that, and before* a more social set of attitudes can be elicited. She knows it is often therapeutic for this to happen, but she knows also that there are boundaries for it. She knows that the disturbed, maladjusted

child must sometimes be permitted to break up toys, and she frequently provides him with specially constructed toys which, once broken, can be restored to their original forms, thus relieving him of any fear of retribution for losing his temper. But when the child's hostility leads him to build a bonfire in the worker's wastebasket or to put his foot through the windowpane, she has to restrain him. It may be that she will tell him she merely does not want him to get hurt or to destroy the place where he has fun, but the basic fact is that she has to delimit his freedom.

Such is the problem in the group situation. One has to remember that groups are composed of individuals, and not lose sight of the fact that, when they are free to speak or act, there is a vast array of motivation and pressure behind the expression, and that the manner in which the overt act is released is our clue to its importance within the individual.

Each of us is locked up, to some extent, and we are bound by hoops of varying strengths, depending upon how we were educated in both mind and body, depending on how firm is our allegiance to the gods of our fathers. We all have our confusions, our prejudices, our pet sets of values and methods of evaluation. We are islands, tied to prescribed areas of belief and feeling and the language of rationalization. It is an important reason for so much of the world's misunderstanding. We do not communicate easily with one another over the gulfs between, because we are islands of doubt, habit, fear, suspicion—and need. We are ringed about by the errors of our times and the momentum of error which our generation has inherited. We are surrounded by ourselves—deeply enmeshed in social poverty.

It was what I kept thinking during the train ride, on my way home from that

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first trip, while I was still puzzling over the reasons why I had been privileged to see a whole roomful of people become truly free with one another and emerge as partially liberated individuals, reasonably secure in their differences and imperfections so long as they were free to try to lessen those imperfections. I wondered what would really happen to them when they returned to their usual ways of life. I kept thinking that John Donne had been correct in the big, gross idea that each man is a "part of the maine"; but, without impairing the wisdom of that philosophy, in this other sense, that of man's easy communication with his fellow men, surely, each man is an island. Not hopelessly so, because I had seen the theory of the textbooks demonstrated: human behavior is capable of change. I could be saved from an impracticable idealism by the violent events of everyday life. I recalled bitterly the sound of bombs on London and the irony of Negro and white American soldiers even then rioting and killing one another; and I told myself with new reason, that in spite of the strife between groups, there was

perhaps still some point in believing in the non-mystical solution of the problems of hatred and violence.

Hudson Shore Labor School is the oldest resident school for workers in the U.S., and began as the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Workers in Industry. It was founded on the Bryn Mawr Campus in 1921, and is now located at West Park, New York, and 95 Liberty Street, New York City. Its student body includes workers from industry, agriculture, and service occupations. The summer-school curriculum includes the social sciences, English, public speaking, dramatics, and courses dealing with the understanding of trade unions.

John Caswell Smith, Jr., is executive secretary of the Urban League of Greater Boston. During the war he was a club director for the American Red Cross in London, and race relations adviser for the Red Cross in the ETO. His short story, "Fighter," an Atlantic "First," has been chosen for the 1947 O. Henry collection.

STAMP OF APPROVAL

MURRAH GATTIS

SPRIG and Sprat Jones and I were eleven, thirteen, and twelve, respectively, that summer when we slipped off from the Mississippi orphanage where we lived to see Jack Holt in a Western. Not only did the boys' matron miss us, but the superintendent, Mr. Ben, who believed movies were as evil as sex and whiskey, saw us when we came out of the theatre.

But we didn't see him, so we were caught in a lie that night while swearing on the Bible that we had been playing in the hayloft all afternoon.

Our punishment was a month's restriction and the job of building a sandpit for the younger children under the two big hackberry trees behind the boys' dormitory. The next day we got three

shovels and three wheelbarrows, and went down to the gravel pit in the center of the pasture about a quarter of a mile behind the dairy barn.

It was just before five o'clock, which was quitting time, when we saw the three Negro boys coming across the pasture. They had been to a movie and were using the path across our place as a short cut on their way home.

"You git the middle-sized un," said Sprat to me. "Sprig, you git the little un. I'll take care of the big un."

Slowly we filled our wheelbarrows, working leisurely until we heard the crunch of their bare feet on the gravel. Then we looked up. They were sons of Negroes who worked on the orphanage plantation, and we knew them by sight though not by name.

"Where you niggers been?" Sprat asked.

The boys hesitated, slowed down, then stopped.

"To the movies," the big one said.

"What you all doin' walkin' acrost this pasture?"

"We goin' home. We always walk acrost here."

"Who said you could?" asked Sprat.

Their faces registered anxiety. The smallest boy was so scared he edged over behind the middle-sized boy, not looking at us, and began to chew on one of his fingernails.

"Nobody. We just do," said their spokesman.

"Don't git smart, you black bastard," said Sprat sharply.

"I ain't gittin' smart," the boy said.

"You bastards are trespassin'."

"Please, white boy, don't keep callin' us bastards," the Negro protested.

Sprat turned to me and Sprig, his mouth open in surprise.

"Did you hear him call me a bastard?" he asked with feigned shock.

He climbed quickly up the small embankment and confronted the Negro who was about his age but seemed to be about ten pounds heavier and an inch taller. I scrambled up the bank with Sprig, and to my satisfaction the middle-sized boy was smaller than I. Certain that I could win easily, I felt an eagerness to start fighting at once.

"Mr. Ben told us to keep all niggers out of the pasture," said Sprat. "All I do is tell you not to come acrost the pasture and you git smart and call me a bastard. That ain't no way for niggers to talk to white boys."

"I ain't called you no bastard," the Negro said. His voice was restrained, gentle, plaintive, but to us it seemed sullen.

"So I'm a liar?" demanded Sprat, doubling up his fists.

"Please, white boy, leave us alone. We got to git home." He took a step in the direction of the Negro quarters.

"Answer me, you bastard," Sprat said angrily, stepping in front of him. "Am I a liar or not?"

"Naw, white boy, you ain't no liar," the Negro, defeated, said sadly.

"Then it's true!" Sprat exclaimed triumphantly. "You did call me a bastard?" He thrust his chin within an inch of the Negro's face. Then suddenly he grabbed his nose and held it delicately between his thumb and forefinger.

"Pee-uuuu!" he said. "Nigger, how you do stink. Don't you ever take a bath?"

The Negro returned evenly, "You stink yo'self, white boy."

Sprat swung with his right and it landed in the Negro's face. Immediately I leaped on the middle-sized boy, punching him hard in the stomach and slugging him in the jaw. He turned around and started running toward the Negro quarters. I ran after him for about twenty yards but he outran me.

When I got back, Sprig was sitting on the little boy's stomach, savagely pounding him in the face with both fists. Sprig wanted to be a prizefighter when he grew up and could whip anyone his size at the orphanage, as well as some who were bigger than he.

But Sprat was not doing so well. After the first blow, which had bloodied the Negro's nose, Sprat had been forced on the defensive. The Negro had moved in quickly, carrying the fight, cleverly guarding himself, jabbing hard and carefully. One of Sprat's eyes had reddened and his face was white.

I ran over to Sprig and pulled him off the boy he was beating.

"We better help Sprat," I said.

A blow on the nose knocked Sprat backward. He stumbled as he stepped back to get his balance, and the Negro pressed his advantage by leaping forward and driving both fists into Sprat's face and body as fast as he could. Sprig saw what was happening and got panicky. He looked around wildly for something to fight with, saw our shovels, and jumped down off the bank to get one. It was awkward for him to wield, but he slipped up behind the Negro, waited until he was standing still, then swung it as hard as he could. The metal part struck the Negro on the side of the head and he dropped his fists and fell over.

Sprat stood over the Negro for a moment, tears in his eyes. Then he began to jump up and down on his back, bringing his feet down hard on the boy's spine.

He stopped and said, "Help me drag the bastard down into the pit. He'll be all right in a minute."

Blood was flowing from the base of the Negro's ear where the edge of the shovel had hit, so in order to make sure we didn't get any blood on us we took hold of his legs and dragged him down the bank. He was heavy and hard to handle.

"We better go," said Sprig. He was frightened.

Sprat dragged the body over to the place where we had been loading our wheelbarrows. We had dug a deep oblong hole there to get fine white sand. Sprat slid the Negro's body into it.

"Cover him up," he said, breathing heavily. "Quick. We gotta git back up to the house."

The body lay on its stomach. We started shoveling sand on top of it, covering the legs and hips.

"Boy, he's gonna be surprised when he comes to," I said.

"Look!" cried Sprig, pointing across the pasture.

The middle-sized boy had reported what was happening, and from the Negro quarters came five or six Negroes, running toward us. They were only a couple of hundred yards away.

"Hurry!" said Sprat. He began to throw sand on the Negro's head.

"Gee, Sprat," I said, "we better not cover up his head. Suppose he died!"

"Listen, runt. Ain't no nigger goin' to call me no bastard and git away with it. I don't give a damn what happens. Understand?"

Sprig was rolling his wheelbarrow away.

"Hurry," he called, crying now. "They'll kill us if they catch us."

Sprat and I got our wheelbarrows and rolled them very fast up to the two big hackberry trees in the backyard.

We were sure the Negroes knew who we were and could identify us, so we were scared at first, afraid that Mr. Ben would punish us. Our fear of punishment made us feel guilty and penitent. We swore to ourselves that if we could just be forgiven for this we would never do anything bad again.

But nothing happened. After a few days of anxious waiting, we grew bold enough to plan a story of how the Negroes

COMMON GROUND

had walked up and the big one had said, "Hey, Sprat, you bastard, you stink." Just like that. Then, a few days later, we stopped worrying. We knew everybody would believe us. Everybody knew that Negroes were always attacking white people and, besides, a Negro wouldn't know the truth if he met it walking down the street.

Pretty soon, about a week later, we were bragging about how we tried to and almost did bury a "nigger" alive. Eventually it got to be the best story the white men in our neighborhood had ever heard. So they said, at any rate, slapping their thighs and laughing.

After that everything was all right. Hell, we hadn't done anything wrong in the first place.

Murrah Gattis was born in Mississippi and spent his childhood in an orphanage there. First studying for the ministry at Southwestern University in Memphis, he shifted to newspaper work on the West Coast. Back now after four years in the Navy, he is at work on a novel about the South. While his short stories and articles have appeared in labor papers on the Coast, this is his first appearance in a national magazine.

STREET SCENE—1946

KENNETH PORTER

*On a street in Knoxville—
bless these eyes of mine!—
white man and a Negro
form a picket line!*

*Rankin and McKellar
rant in Washington:
over eastern Tennessee
shows a streak of sun!*

*Storms and shadows thicken.
Here is fairing weather!
Negro and a white man
picketing together!*

Kenneth Porter is a member of the history department at Vassar College. His "The Flying Africans" appeared in the Autumn 1943 issue of CG.

THE PACHUCO PATOIS

BEATRICE GRIFFITH

WHAT does an underprivileged Mexican American youth, living in a poor and often illiterate family, find when, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, he enters the "front of life"? He finds conflicts so perplexing and so full of contradictions that he sometimes flees the responsibilities of both cultures—that of his parents and that of America—and creates his own world of *Pachuquismo*. Thus it is that, out of the estimated 400,000 persons of Mexican ancestry in Los Angeles County, there is a small group of teenage boys and girls, who by virtue of certain characteristics of dress, behavior, and language are called Pachucos. Many people make the mistake of typing all Mexican American youth by this group. Actually, they are a small percentage of the whole.

In 1943 at the height of the dragnet arrests that preceded the zoot suit riots in Los Angeles, Karl Holton, then Chief Probation officer for Los Angeles County—and one of the few whose voices were raised against the increasing clamor of anti-Mexican hysteria—said, "There are probably between 36,000 and 38,000 young Mexican Americans in this county, and the recent gangsterism has not involved more than a few hundred."

In the world of *Pachuquismo* the youth are pulled by the tides of both cultures that flow around them: on the one hand, the dark warm tide of the Mexican craft-pastoral culture of their parents; on the other, the bright American glow of

movies, radio, jive, and the American tradition of economic opportunity stressed in their schoolrooms.

The roots of *Pachuquismo* grow in rich but shallow soil. They are nourished neither by deep tradition nor age-old mores. Rather they are nurtured by intense vitality and individualism, frustration and rebellion. In this world of their own making, these maladjusted youngsters have created their own language, Pachuco talk; their own style of dress—zoot suits (now rapidly going out of fashion); and their own folklore and behavior patterns. They have developed a neighborhood group spirit that has resulted in the establishment of a few-score areas and territories of influence for the groups of teen-agers living in those areas—thus creating the so-called gangs.

These youngsters seldom get the opportunity to meet the better representatives of either the Mexican or American cultures. Many of the "Americans" whom they do meet do not endear themselves to the inquiring mind and sensitive heart of a child: unsympathetic teachers, superior "American kids" in school, the discriminating police and sheriff's deputies, the neighborhood merchants, most of whom in one way or another underline their majority group position. Children are realists; they also generalize. It is on the basis of how the adult groups treat them personally that they derive their opinions of the world around them. As the adult representatives seem to be

against them, they feel it necessary for security to band together in their neighborhood groups.

Because of the cleavage between the upper and poorer classes of Mexican background, the underprivileged children of Mexican immigrants are usually denied the advantages of leadership from the educated and cultured in the group, upon whom the impact of discrimination is comparatively lightly felt in California, because most have considerable French or Spanish intermixture and their culture allows for easy assimilation. Therefore, in the presence of authority, either Mexican or American, these boys and girls feel uncomfortable, inferior, and self-conscious. Their ignorance of social customs and lack of an adequate knowledge of the English language (as well as Spanish) make many of them almost inarticulate when out of the familiar neighborhood patterns of behavior and language. ("I speak English like Chinese and can't write Mexican—I'm dumb all right.")

The impact of discrimination is a steady and relentless one, often leaving severe psychic scars that no amount of schooling about opportunities in "this great land of opportunity" can erase. As one twelve-year-old girl said, "To succeed in this country a Mexican like the Negro has to be bigger than Superman. Gee, I wish we was American cause all Americans is movie stars, and all mens got jobs."

Their anxieties and maladjustments start in early childhood. They are not Mexican by citizenship, nationality, or culture. They are Americans, but to the fifth generation they are known as "Mexicans," if their skin is dark or they bear a Spanish name.

One of the main differences between the children and their parents is that most of the latter remember poverty and peonage in Mexico, also revolutions and violence. And, remembering, they are

resigned and passive to trials and difficulties here. Their American children also are born in poverty, but have the advantage of being born in a land of liberty and democracy. They are not resigned, nor are they passive. The most rebellious and maladjusted become Pachucos. At school they are told they are equal to other Americans, but many are in segregated classes; others are kept out of dance halls, parks, and swimming pools; restaurants may refuse them service. Inevitably they are torn by conflicts that to them are not answerable. They have received from their ancestors a deep, strong, and justifiable pride, and often the contrary pulls of desire and reality twist their perspectives on "Americans" and American culture into extremes of opinion and emotion. ("California once belonged to Mexico. We have as much or more right than the Gavachos to live here." "We're Americans for the draft, but Mexicans for getting jobs.")

So you have the world of *Pachuquismo*, in which a small minority of the American children of Mexican ancestry find their being. *Pachuquismo* has declined, however, since the war. Its full flowering and growth during the war years was part of the war hysteria. The older brothers of these teen-agers were away in the services; their parents were working in factories. The ordinary conflicts were increased, and the war disturbance and restlessness found expression among the more maladjusted Mexican American youngsters in *Pachuquismo*.

Thousands of other Mexican American teen-agers also wore drapes (zoot suits) in one form or another, but they are not to be considered Pachucos. Drapes were worn because they were the style for jive dancing. To be a Square (one who does not drape out) was to be considered old-fashioned and dull indeed, by the jive experts. After the zoot suit riots in 1943

Dave Bogan, then Director of Research and Statistics for the Los Angeles County Probation Department, made the statement, "The majority of the Mexican American boys who wear 'zoot suits' are probably guilty of nothing more serious than sartorial indiscretion and over enthusiasm for 'jive.'"

Earnest Ramirez, President of the *hi-y* at Jordon High School in Southeast Los Angeles, said it another way. He was talking before a *hi-y* club at the South Gate High School in April 1944: "We didn't know anything about zoot suits until the riots. We always called them drapes. Now you fellows here are dressed in T shirts and jeans. We wouldn't dress that way if we wanted to be well dressed. It would be like wearing overalls. We'd think we were dressed like farmers. To dress up we always wear drapes."

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The picture has changed, however, since the war's end. Drapes are no longer the style. The fad has passed, as other fads of dress have come and gone in America. But the Pachuco patois is still an important part of the language of many of the Mexican American youngsters.

The Pachuco dialect is a *mélange*, composed of *Caló*, Hispanicized English, Anglicized Spanish, and words of pure invention. Its vitality comes from its flexibility and the constant flux of new words. It is essentially a language of convenience, utilizing lingual inventions with remarkable exactness of meaning; a language in which humor and circumstance play an important role.

Caló slang is in the speech of Mexican immigrants coming here to work from over the border by way of the slums of Juarez and El Paso; it was prominent in the language of the first Pachucos to make their impression on Los Angeles

in the '20s, but its growth since the late '30s has been extremely rapid.

As the second generation of Mexican Americans pushed themselves into the complex life of Los Angeles, many youngsters from the poorer underprivileged sections of the city, whose education was brief, took on the Pachuco slang as part of their daily speech. It is estimated that about a third of the Mexican American youth speak Pachuco in one form or another, a third more understand it, and the remaining third, who are better educated, look upon it as vulgar and illiterate.

Caló is defined as "A jargon spoken among gypsies, ruffians and prisoners." It was, and is today, a vital part of the language spoken by many of the illiterates in Mexico City, and it is also the language of the Mexican underworld, that shadowy, insecure realm of so much living vernacular. Many words once correct in old Spanish, and since abandoned in the stream of idiomatic history, are now part of a living dialect among those sections of the population where education does not probe its antiseptic fingers.

An example of *Caló* in the Pachuco vernacular of Los Angeles Mexican Americans is the word *chavalo*, meaning girl. This is direct from the language of the bull fighters in Mexico City, a group that speaks its own brand of *Caló* and likewise exerts considerable influence among its followers. Most of the bull fighters are from the south of Spain, where the Granada gypsy influence is strong and vigorous. The admirers of *los toreros* pick up their language at the *corridos* and in the *cafés*, and by usage bring it into the speech of the Mexican population. Other examples of *Caló* that have come up to the States and into Pachuco vocabulary are *tando* (hat), *calcos* (shoes), *lima* (shirt), and *gacho* (lousy).

Pachuco talk represents also a degeneration of the Spanish language which results from an inadequate Spanish vocabulary and the inability to write in the tongue that is spoken in the home. (About nine-tenths of the Mexican American youth cannot write Spanish. Most children don't take it in school or stay there long enough to take it.) The vocabulary of their parents is such that children hear many words in English but not the equivalent in Spanish. The Pachuco's inventiveness and lack of education has forced him to follow the habit of all immigrants, that of taking the language of America into the construction of his native tongue. Hence, the Hispanicizing of English words is common in the homes of the second generation youngsters. *Los laites* (car lights), *las brechas* (brakes), *las tallas* (tires) are some examples of Hispanicized English, as is *rolando* (rolling)—*rolando un frajo* (rolling a cigarette). It is natural that these youngsters Hispanicize English words more than they Anglicize Spanish words because the American culture is dominant.

The creativeness of the Pachucos is constant and diversified. They take delight in the fun and prestige of inventing new words. Thus some Pachucos of Maravilla will make a humorous allusion, and it may be successful enough to spread through the Flats, over to Happy Valley, the Avenues, Rose Hills, down to Califa, Macy, Alpine, 38th Street, and on to Watts. By spreading from one district to another it becomes usage. An example is the word *la paloma*, meaning literally the dove. In Pachuco dialect it means a prisoner in Lincoln Heights Jail, which was built on the site of an old pigeon farm near the Los Angeles River. The jail itself becomes *el palomar*.

One of the favorite means of creating

new words is to twist the familiar Spanish words learned in the home into new meanings—to make them fit a situation that needs a word. Such a word is *vacilar*, meaning in Spanish to hesitate; to the Pachucos it means to flirt, to fool around. Another is the word *estudiar*, meaning to study, but those speaking Pachuco patois use it to mean to stare down.

Still another form of inventiveness is seen in the word *barojear*, which is Pachuco for one who hangs around. There are those who say that *barojear* comes from the verb *barajear* (to move cards around, to shuffle) and others who claim the use of it by the Pachucos shows it to be derived from *barrio*, meaning poor district or neighborhood (opposite to *colonias*, the district of the upper class in Mexico). Another example of this type of creativeness is the word *carruchar*, which comes from *carrucha*, meaning old car (literally wheelbarrow), but to the Pachucos it means to be picked up by the cops.

Another type of inventiveness common with those who create Pachucano is to take a word that sounds like the word they want to use and "cash in" on the sound, sometimes with slight modification. In this way a word will have the same general phonetic impression without being identical. Such a word is *pastilla*, meaning literally cough drop; actually it is one of the many Pachuco words for the police—*policía* and *pastilla* (in its shortened form it becomes *la pasta*) sounding somewhat alike. Another example is *el paciente*, meaning patient. In its corrupted form it is now taken to be a humorous adaptation of El Paso. The fairly common habit of using one word which gives the impression of another is one of the fundamental ways in which Pachuco dialect is built up.

THE PACHUCO PATOIS

Perhaps two of the most interesting inventions, and typical, are found in the words *chanclos* (meaning shoes—from Rose Hills) and *chante* (meaning house—San Fernando). From the noun *chanclos*, however, the youngsters have gone further and made a verb *chanclear*, meaning to dance, a logical progression of thought to these jive experts. Similarly, the noun *chante* (which is said to come from the English word shanty) is used to denote a house to the Pachuco. However, it is made into a verb that means to get married, *chantarse*.

Jale has many meanings—to work, make love, or fool around (on the assumption that love is work).

The exactness with which words fit the meanings these versatile youths want to get is often remarkable. There is seldom a subtle difference in understanding of a given word. Their limited vocabulary demands that they get the utmost use out of every word they create. Thus to San Fernando youth, the noun *jainos* is the word for lovers; *estan jainos*, sweethearts; *jainar*, to make love; and *vamos a jainar*, let's go make love—smooch or neck.

There are many words understood only in the particular neighborhood from which they come, unknown in other Pachuco neighborhood groups or *barrios*. This custom is obviously useful to gang groups which are unfriendly or actually feuding. Thus, words vary from group to group, from neighborhood to district. *La mano* (hand) becomes *la vaisa* in Belvedere, *la manola* in Alpine, and *la mandolina* in Watts, finally becoming *la visa* in San Fernando. There are other words of a much more hidden meaning, which the boys use when necessary—some created overnight.

It was inevitable that some jive talk should cut its way into the language of the devotees of jitterbug dancing,

whether the rug-cutters were Mexican American, Negro American, Japanese American or any other minority. But there is not as much of this argot as one would assume, judging from the craze for boogie-woogie music. Some few words have been taken over into the Pachuco vocabulary direct from the Negro jive, such as "slick chick, fine chick, sharp (he's sharp, man!)" and so on. Occasionally also the Mexican American youngsters who are particularly "sharp" will create an expression in English using the Negro jive talk style. Such is the saying popular in Dogtown, "He threw me a shine." When asked where it came from, one little chick gaily replied, "Oh, you know when you pass shoe-shine kids and they always say, 'Shine—shine?' Well, when you don't pay them attention, it's throwing them a shine, see?" Thus, "to throw a shine" means to snub.

The cryptic rhymed slang so dear to the zootsuiters (glad plaid, dressed vest, reat pleat, reave sleeve, stuff cuff) has occasionally crept into Pachuco dialect as *el alva nalga* (hep bottom, actually); *el gacho nacho* (lousy Ignacio); *hay está la historia gloria* (the glorious story—tall tale); and so on. Pachucos have fun with these meaningless rhymes, and usually give them a short but popular life.

The manner in which Pachuco slang is spoken is important to a student interested in this virile offshoot of the Spanish language. The rhythm is quick and nervous. It is spoken with a high nasal sound, with varying emphasis on the first and last syllables—accented by a slight rise in the voice on the first syllable, and a dropping on the last. Greetings and exclamations tend to be in a monotone. Often there is a tendency to eliminate the last vowel of some words. There is also a definite sing-song effect with something of a marked, broken rhythm. This type of speaking is not

typically Spanish, which has its own soft cadences and flows with distinct rhythms or staccato emphasis as the occasion demands. The high nasal speech and the casual "throwing off" of words and vowels is typical of Pachucos and as much a part of their vernacular as their creation of new words to suit their whim or fancy.

Although Pachuco words are developing steadily, there are seldom more than 400 words in any Pachuco vocabulary of standard equipment. If a word "clicks" it sticks. But many more are dropped after a short trial.

Pachuco vernacular is then, in its inventions and expediency, a constantly changing and living speech, a really pragmatic language of varying forms and usages. The philosophy of these young Americans can almost be realized by observation of their emphasis on certain types of words that have the most meaning for them. Pachuco patois is one of emotion and action, rather than of ideas, and it does not allow for the planting of abstract concepts, for to these youth such concepts have little significance.

The Pachucos' facility for creating new words tends to build a wall between their speech world and that of their parents, or their parents' friends from old Mexico. The Pachuco argot is usually not understood by parents (except for the more common words) and a Pachuco youth translating for his parents to his probation officer, or county "visitor," or "American" friend will often through sheer necessity shorten the thought so as to emasculate it, or give up in sheer disgust. Abstract ideas are quite foreign to him, and as a rule entirely unintelligible when spoken in his parents' Spanish.

So these young people have a dual language block, that of Spanish as well as English. It is thus easy to understand

how the use of abstract Spanish or English words is usually impossible with these children of little education. Such abstractions have small meaning for a boy or girl who never hears these or similar words spoken at home or school, for the equivalent words are missing from his knowledge and daily speech.

When asked whether or not his father ever belonged to an organization, one rural Pachuco youth replied, "Organization? Don't know . . . well yes, I guess he did. An organization is where you pay money to get benefit when you die, huh?" In this manner the average youth of Mexican ancestry is further isolated from the culture of his parents because he cannot adequately explain his thoughts in Spanish to his parents, nor in English to his teacher, employer, or the court or policeman if they enter his life.

In spite of the language block which handicaps these boys and girls so severely in school, work, and in the courts, a deep sense of poetry is present in much of their English speech. It is marked in the ages from nine to fourteen, usually, and it often comes through as a literal translation from Spanish to English in a strong, primitive kind of speaking. Sometimes the results are lyrical expressions of rare beauty. Certainly the language of these younger boys and girls is pungent, vital, and full of imagery. Aware of their handicap in speaking, one eleven-year-old girl had this to say about her mother when she cried for her sons in the war: "You feel deep deep to your fingers, and all through your arms, body, and legs, but the words don't come."

The following phrases have been told to me on various occasions; they are as good as any to demonstrate the rich speech of these young Mexican Americans. They are not limited to any one class of children, although those from

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the poorer homes (with less opportunity to hear good English) are more frequent in number, and seem more rich.

"You know, when my little sister died in the church and they had the funeral, all was black you know. The altar and the cloth hanging down was black. The priest was black, only the coffin was white and the Host. All the candles was lighted and there was no flowers. In the church when they came out they put her in a truck with lots of flowers. We saw a long girl weeping."

"When my teacher had the sickness with her heart, my mother sent her some deer's blood with coral ground up in it. It cures all hearts of their sickness—all but the sickness of love. And that is for no man to cure, only the one who gives it to you; only he can make the cure. But one thing our teacher don't know, that the man that kills a woman's heart will be killed by one unless she will pardon him with her heart, and not many womens give the pardon, I think—they cry too deep."

After a day at the beach, one twelve-year-old summed it up this way: "The girls ran from the waves to the rocks and the sun gave and they got more brown. When I stood in the pool by the rocks the water fitted me up to my little round breasts. It was cold like night."

The first trip to the Hollywood Bowl brought this reaction from an eleven-year-old: "At the Bowl a man got up and talked after the music. He asked everybody to stand up, and they did—all, smashed *nalgas* and thin ones. He asked them to hold a little match like in church when the priest lights for saving souls, only this was for making advertising picture. It was beautiful, just millions of little lights all lighting at once, like the night sky fell down quick."

The use of double adjectives for emphasis is another common usage in the

speech of these youngsters. "Did you ever work in cotton, Miss? It makes you sweat strong strong." "He beat his wife hard hard with soft hands." And straight from her own language, as well as the Bible, this child might have taken the use of the word "very"; "My father walked out into the very night, the black-smelling night across the tracks and rain."

Here are more of their expressions that are particularly lyrical:

"I am happy like red ribbons."

"The hours go like singing when you're at a party."

"My father went down the lonely working man's street."

"She was up at four o'clock in the market, hunting for her life."

"My mother works hard all her life, that's why she's old young."

"I like to run through the grass and touch it with my feet, not to touch it hard, but soft soft, and hear it say things . . . like running through the vacant lot after the rain with the grass and flowers, and the railroad wood piled up with the tracks shining in the sun. Then the slaughterhouse stink doesn't blow so hard."

Sometimes the older boys and girls come through with a lyrical expression—as a matter of fact, most of them will if you talk long enough, and understandingly, so they really "let their hair down" about their feelings. For both young and old Mexicans and their children truly speak from their hearts, that is, "through their feelings."

"At the camps, the first light of the grey white foggy dawn came down on the stillness and dripping trees. In the tent next to us there was a man and old woman snoring still. The roosters and kids were getting up, all making noises. Pans were scrambling around—men building fires. The morning was white

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and still and lonely, all quiet with no sun. My brother didn't want to wake up to pick cots in the still white morning. He didn't want to hear that morning train come in whistling over the long river."

"My grandmother was a woman, that's what she was, a real woman. We would go from the house where there was not much food and out into the brown hills where the rabbits were like God's little animals, many and lots. When we come from hunting, my aunt would give us tortillas fresh from the stove and cool beer. Then we would roast a rabbit crisp and brown with sweet juice running from it. And while we sat in my grandmother's kitchen looking from the door into the hills and trees, life was sweet, soft and warm like a woman. It was good for the minute."

"Sometimes I am lonely and do not know what I'm lonely for. The loneliness that comes to you, comes because you are no longer a kid and really know what it means to be alone. Nobody really knows anything about anybody really, you know. Then sometimes I think kids are the most lonely, and that the loneliness you get is the remembering the loneliness you had when you were a kid—alone.

"Then it's like the night falling down out of the sky quick. Like a blob of dark and you are all alone in the dark. Then I have such a big sadness you cannot imagine. It's in my fingers and arms, it's in my mouth and heavy on my chest and legs. I really don't know what makes it so. Sometimes music from my guitar will come inside and it makes me sad like that in my neck and mouth. It's not there when I'm happy, of course."

This material is from a book on Mexican American teen-agers by Beatrice Griffith, to be published next spring by Houghton, Mifflin, whose non-fiction fellowship she won in 1945.

A graduate of Pomona College, Miss Griffith has worked intensively with Mexican American youngsters, first as a social worker, then as project supervisor for the National Youth Administration, and then as community director in a Los Angeles Housing Project. Her book started through the accumulation of copious notes, in which she recorded the verbatim stories of these adolescents and teen-agers, their speech demanding to be put down somewhere, she says.

SOIL FOR FREEDOM

NORMA BIXLER

IT WAS the first day that had really felt like spring. Ragged bits of snow were still melting in the hollows along the creek that separated our pasture from the Dusiks'. But the cottonwoods and the birches growing along the bank looked as if green mist had been sprayed over them.

Jim was going to be working around the house so, while little Jim slept and Rachel trotted about at her father's heels, I walked around by the road to the Dusiks'. I had a bundle of baby clothes I wanted to take Sigrid, things little Jim had outgrown months before. Sigrid Dusik would be needing them before many more months of the new spring had passed.

It was a day to walk, too, and to feel good just being alive. The sun was almost hot on my back under my sweater, and the winter wheat was turning lightly green again on the strong, black soil. I walked over to the edge of the road and reached through the fence and broke one of the black, crumbly clods in my hand. It ran through my fingers like something alive.

Anton Dusik came up behind me, out of the lane that ran to the lower Dusik pastures, and I jumped up like a kid caught at cookies. But he didn't even smile. He just stood by me, slender and straight, his black eyes quiet, and watched the last of the dirt go through my fingers onto the road. Then he nodded as if we'd talked it all over. "It's good dirt," he said. Anton never did talk much. That came from living with his father so long, I guess.

We walked on down the road together,

Anton swinging my bundle by its strings until I said, "Better be careful, Anton. There are clothes for your baby in that package."

Then he flushed and smiled shyly. "Sigrid's fine," he volunteered. "She's quiet, though. That's natural, maybe?"

I didn't know why having a baby should make a woman stop talking, but I suppose it could, so I just nodded.

He left me near the house and turned off toward the barn, and I went on to the house. Sigrid was baking bread and the warm kitchen smelled sweet. The windows



were open because the range was hot, and the sun and the wind came in.

Sigrid was as clean as her house. She smiled at me over her shoulder from in front of the oven and then she got to her

feet a little clumsily. But when she stood, it was with the grace of a pine even though her body was thick. She came over to kiss me, her blue eyes clear and direct as they always were, her golden hair braided like a crown around her head.

"Just in time for some coffee with me," she said, urging me into a chair at the white-scrubbed kitchen table. She went into the pantry, past the range and old Jan Dusik's big rocker beside it.

When she came back with a loaf of the fresh bread, she stepped around the braided rug folded close by the chair without even looking, and the white kitten lying there slept without alarm.

I couldn't help smiling. The neighbors had talked a lot when Sigrid decided to marry Anton. They didn't think she'd be happy in that foreign family, they said. Sigrid's father had come from Norway just as Anton's dad had come from Bohemia, but there were lots of Norwegians around and the Dusiks were the only Czechs. Besides, they said, Mr. Dusik was pretty bossy. And of course he was.

Sigrid sliced through the warm bread and put a dish of strawberry jam on the table beside the bread plate. "I uncovered the strawberry plants this morning," she said. "Father Dusik scolded. Said Anton would just have to cover them again tonight. But it's a good day. I needed to do something like that." She grinned and lifted her shoulders in a gesture she had picked up from old Jan Dusik. I thought of Anton's catching me at that dirt and I knew what she meant.

She brought out the gray granite coffee-pot and measured the coffee into it carefully.

Maybe Jan Dusik was bossy, I thought, watching her, but Sigrid had worked it out.

If she made him cross by shooing him out of his corner where he carved while

she scrubbed the kitchen floor, she won him back by learning to sing the words of those Bohemian furiantes and polkas he was always playing on his accordion. Or if she said all but one of the cats must stay down at the barn and had Father Dusik shouting all over the place, he'd forget all about it when he came in to supper and found she'd cooked him kolace. She'd worked it out all right, until he thought she was the finest woman in the world. When he knew about the baby, then he was sure.

While we drank our coffee, I unwrapped the clothes I had brought for her child and showed her the way you fold diapers oblong instead of in a triangle. She picked up the things and sort of cuddled them and said, "Are they really that little?" And there were tears in her eyes.

That was the first thing that surprised me. Because Sigrid's face might shine when she spoke of Anton or the baby so that any fool could tell what she was thinking, but she wasn't given to easy tears. After all, though, a woman has a right to a few extras before her first-born, like being quiet and crying easily, so I just hugged her and wiped my own eyes and forgot about it.

She was showing me the little flannel wrappers with fine, pink feather-stitching she had made, when Father Dusik came in, and that's where I got my second surprise. Usually she teased him and laughed with him, but this time she folded up the wrappers quickly as if she didn't want him to see.

Maybe it was just because Sigrid was quiet but Father Dusik seemed downright noisy. He unbuttoned his work jacket and hung it behind the door and pulled his red knitted cap off his black curly head, talking all the time.

"The spring is here today, I think, Mrs. Horton. You smelled it, too? Soon

there will be a big day for our house." He settled back on the worn leather cushions of his rocker. "It's good for a child to be born in the spring, eh, Sigrid? Spring is the season for borning. Then the child is strong and sturdy for the winter when it comes."

Sigrid didn't answer him.

He didn't seem to notice. He went on to me proudly. "Since you were here, I have finished it and you haven't seen it yet." He jumped up and opened the living-room door, pulled out a small something covered with an old quilt, and whisked off the cover.

It was the crib Sigrid had told me he was making. It was a beautiful thing, of cherry, waxed and rubbed until it shone. It was set on rockers, with a bit of carving on the headboard. Sigrid's lips tightened at the sight of it.

He took up a small cloth from the bench behind his chair and rubbed the already glowing wood.

"When he sleeps there, his little black head will catch the sun, and the red will shine in it. And I will sing him songs of Prokop the Great and Prokop the Lesser, the brave men, the men of freedom. Little fellow! Little Jan!" He crooned the words.

I thought it was the bed, some way, that made Sigrid stand so still for a minute when he said that, so I interrupted, "Have you chosen his name, then, Sigrid?"

She didn't answer right away, and Father Dusik stopped his rocking and seemed to be waiting for what she was going to say.

"Yes," she said at last very firmly. Just that one word. Father Dusik quickly pushed the bed out of sight into the other room. His face was black, and he didn't come back into the kitchen.

I was all at sea, and when Sigrid didn't say anything at all, I began to feel awkward and stood up to go. She came to me, then, in a quick sort of rush, and said, "Oh, Mrs. Horton, you'll help me when the time comes, won't you? I'm going to need you!"

Her hands gripped my shoulders.

I thought she meant when the baby came. I patted her on the shoulder and said I'd come as soon as Anton could get there for me.

But, starting home, I certainly wasn't as happy about them as I had been earlier. I saw Anton down by the barn. He waved at me and I thought of going down to talk to him but decided not to. I didn't



know what to say. He'd already seen Sigrid was quiet. He probably saw the rest, too, better than I did.

Jim had to go to the county seat the next day. He expected to be gone all day so I took Rachel and little Jim and went along. It was pretty late that evening when we turned in our own yard. I had Rachel's hand, and Jim was behind me carrying the baby as we started up the steps of the back porch.

Out of the dusk of the top step, a woman rose a little slowly. She startled us all, and Rachel let out a little yelp.

But Sigrid spoke quickly, for it was Sigrid of course. "It's just me. I came to spend the night with you. I've got to. Can I?"

Jim answered first, hearty and puzzled, "Sure, Sigrid, but what's happened? Where's Anton?"

I broke in with something about getting the children to bed before it was any later and took Sigrid upstairs with me while I undressed them and tucked them in.

Finally we had to go down. Jim had stirred up the furnace so the house was getting warm again, and he was sitting in the living room waiting for us. He didn't look puzzled any more, just sort of bright and hearty and embarrassed.

"Look, Sigrid," he began, "if you and Anton have had some sort of quarrel, it's all right. Even Betty and I have them sometimes. Let me go get Anton and you make it up and—"

He had said all the words in a quick rush before I could interrupt him, but I shushed him finally and turned to Sigrid.

"Tell us what it is, dear."

She didn't start right away. You could tell she couldn't find the words. "Anton and I are Americans. Our child is American, too. It doesn't matter if he has blond or black hair. I don't care. But in his blood and in his heart he'll be an Ameri-

can like we are." She stopped then, searching for ways to go on.

"Father Dusik, he's sort of half-Bohemian and half-American. That's all right. My dad's like that, sometimes, too. But not our son. Not our son!" Her words were fierce and urgent.

"Of course not, Sigrid. We can see that," Jim said.

"But Father Dusik doesn't." She spoke quickly. "Some way, since his country suffered, he loves it more than ever. That I can see, too. My dad, I think, feels the same about Norway. But Father Dusik—some way he wants the boy to grow up all Bohemian as if he could prove that way that the country and its dreams were—were strong and for forever."

Her voice grew low and pleading as if she had to make us understand.

"I want him to love both the countries from which he comes. Like he will love his grandparents. If he learns to talk Bohemian with his grandfather, that's all right. Only his language must be American, really." She stopped again, then stumbled on.

"His name must be American, too. Not Jan. John, yes, if Father Dusik wants that. But not Jan. That makes him foreign again. But Father Dusik says it must be Jan. So I am taking him home to be born."

It was all out now. More words than I had ever heard Sigrid speak in one stretch. And not too clear. Jim didn't quite see it, I could tell. But I thought I did, finally. The name was only a symbol. Like that black dirt to me. But it mattered, terribly.

She looked tired. There were black smudges around her eyes, and her lips were colorless and lax. I stood up. "It's all right, Sigrid," I told her. "You stay here till morning, and then I'll drive you over to your mother's."

We were just starting up to bed our-

selves when someone knocked. Jim went to the door and Anton came in.

"I've got to see my wife," he began.

"She's asleep, I think, Anton," I said, hesitating, "and awfully tired."

"One thing I must tell her," he insisted. "Has she talked to you?" We nodded.

"It's my fault that she's up there alone. I didn't see how important it was to her. Over and over I've told her we'd call him Jan to satisfy him, and afterwards, he could be John. That's the way I've always handled him. Agreed with him, and then, when it didn't matter to him any more, done what I thought."

I knew that, of course. That's why it never worried me—the neighbors saying Mr. Dusik was the boss—when Sigrid was married.

"Sigrid couldn't see it my way. But that's all right. A husband and wife belong together. We'll start somewhere else, the three of us." So Jim took him to Sigrid.

After that there was just one day after another, with nothing much happening. It wasn't hard for a good farm hand to find work, and Anton did odd jobs here and there while Sigrid stayed in the little bare place they found at the end of town.

No one was very happy, certainly not Father Dusik. He began coming across the fields to our house, sitting under our apple tree, whittling and watching little Jim in his playpen. He made Rachel a wooden doll, and painted its cheeks pink and its eyes blue like hers. She took it to bed with her every night. But nothing really happened.

He knew we saw them, I guess, because once when he stood up to go home and was brushing the shavings off his pants, he said, "If the little one comes, you will tell me please, Mrs. Horton." Then he went home without looking at me.

The next Sunday morning, after church, we drove by to see Anton and Sigrid. It was too nice a day to stay inside. They were both out, Sigrid sitting in a chair on the porch and Anton tramping around the little yard restlessly.

Sigrid didn't get up. She smiled at us both with her mouth, but her eyes looked gray instead of blue, and she was awfully quiet. Jim and Anton wandered around as men do, stopping to lean against the porch once in a while. I told Sigrid about the new minister, but she wasn't much interested.

When the men came close, though, she knew they were there, at least Anton, and she looked at him like a sun glass pulling all the focus to one spot.

I noticed the look first when I heard Anton ask quietly, "How's the farm? How's he?" And Jim said, "All right, I guess. There was a new calf last week."

Anton said, "That makes five."

"Calves?" Jim asked.

"Cows. To milk," Anton answered.

Anton was telling Jim about the new fence posts he'd been setting for Mr. Johnson west of town when Sigrid stood up. Not fast, because she had to sort of lift herself, but, some way, it gave you the feeling of its being fast and decisive.

"Let's go home, Anton," she said. "We don't belong here."

He started to say something but she didn't let him finish.

"We don't belong here," she repeated, as if that explained everything.

"But we can't just go right off. We'll have to pack or—something," Anton protested.

"No. We can do that afterwards." Sigrid smiled at him with her mouth and her eyes, and Anton smiled back but he still looked mixed up. "The Hortons will take us, won't you?"

Jim nodded. "It won't be out of our way." But he looked surprised, too.

Then we were in the car, Anton in the front with Jim, holding Rachel on his lap, with Sigrid and me in the back with little Jim.

Anton turned around once in a while and tried to ask questions, but Sigrid didn't answer. She seemed away somewhere again. The road had been dragged and freshly graveled, and it was hard and bumpy as it is in the spring. She braced herself with one hand and hung on hard to the side of the car with the other as if she was saving herself the bumps.

Mr. Dusik was sitting on the back porch whittling when we drove in.

You wouldn't believe that Sigrid could get out of the car so fast. She walked straight to him, and her face was sort of shining and her eyes were terribly blue.

"We've come home, Father Dusik," she said. "This is where we belong and you were right about that."

The old man's face relaxed.

"The seeds of freedom are in the heart," Sigrid said. "It took me a while to learn that. If it's there, the words we use to say it don't matter much. We're home now and Jan will be born in his own house."

First I thought Father Dusik was going to cry but he didn't. He took off his hat like a fine gentleman and offered her his arm. He was gay and dancing and courteous all at once.

"The kitchen is not as clean as you like it, daughter. But let's go in."

The rest of us trooped along behind. Anton kept watching his wife with a strong, proud look.

The first thing you noticed about the kitchen wasn't that it was neat as a pin. The first thing you noticed was the cradle, sitting close by Father Dusik's rocker.

Sigrid started toward it, and when she was quite close, she stopped so quickly I almost bumped into her, and she made

a sort of moan. She bent down and rubbed her finger along the carving of the headboard. I peered over her shoulder. Twisted in among the leaves were letters that stood out as deep and strong as print. Four letters. "JOHN."

She started to cry and Father Dusik quick had her into his rocking chair and was giving her his big, clean handkerchief and talking to her in a low, crooning voice.

"Don't cry, little daughter. Don't cry, my little one. In Bohemia we say 'trava,' but here we call it 'grass' and our hearts are not hurt by it. You said yourself that the words do not matter. Smile for an old man that he knows your heart is soft for him."

She did smile finally, wiping her eyes on the big handkerchief, first for Father Dusik, and then a long deep smile for Anton standing anxiously near. She reached up and put her hand on Anton's arm as if she were going to stand up. But then she stiffened again as she did in the car going over the bumps, one hand tight on the arm of the rocker, the other on Anton's arm. Her fingers must have bitten deep into his arm because he looked shocked. After a little she relaxed and got to her feet.

"I think now I must go to bed," she said, "for tonight John will sleep in his cradle."

I'm writing it John because that's the way it is on the birth certificate. But for the life of me, when Sigrid speaks, I can never decide afterwards whether she has said Jan or John.

Norma Bixler is a former newspaper woman, now doing free-lance writing, teaching journalism at Antioch College, and bringing up a family of three sons. Her husband is librarian at Antioch and editor of the Antioch Review.

Bernadine Custer is the illustrator.

ON MY SON'S BIRTHDAY

MILTON KAPLAN

I watch you roll in a comfortable world
Padded on all sides by solicitude,
And I smile that I should address you, curled
As you are, a pattern of unresponsiveness.
This is your birthday. On this day you should
Have songs about the birds and little fishes,
And perhaps some day I shall write them for you,
But not today.

Today I watch you twist
And roll across the grass, and all around
Your unsuspecting form I roll the mist
Of my fears. For many years I have heard the sound
Of children crying in the dark, and watching you,
I cannot forget, and when you fall and cry,
I hear your cry reechoed into the cry
Of all the children who can no longer lock
Their little fists in agony, and I
Must turn away and resolve myself to rock.

Islanded by peace, I am stormed by the sound
Of children crying in the sea-wide dark,
Crying without response, yet crying sharp
And shrill against my jagged memory,
Tearing at the sand, sucking on the stone,
Crying in the dark until my obdurate bones
Dissolve and beat upon the rocky sea.

Milton Kaplan is a frequent contributor of both prose and poetry to CG.

• The Pursuit of Liberty •

CONDUCTED BY MILTON R. KONVITZ

ALIEN LAND LAWS BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT

THE AMERICAN Jewish Congress through its Commission on Law and Social Action, the American Civil Liberties Union, and other groups are behind an undertaking to get the United States Supreme Court to declare the California Alien Land Law unconstitutional. The Oyama case which these organizations are supporting is worthy of more than passing note. On April 7 the court agreed to review the case.

Kajiro Oyama is an alien of Japanese descent. His minor son Fred is a native American citizen. In 1934 and 1937 Fred's parents paid for certain farm lands in California but the lands were conveyed to Fred. The California act permits aliens eligible to citizenship to own and occupy land, but it prohibits aliens ineligible to citizenship (Asiatics, except Chinese, Filipinos, and East Indians, are ineligible under existing laws of Congress) from possessing, occupying, or using land. Land held in violation of the law may be taken by the state. Proceeding under this act, the state brought an action in a California court for the escheat of the Oyama lands on the ground that the parents were the real owners and that title had been vested in the son only in order to defeat the purposes of the statute. The Superior Court and the Supreme Court of California concluded that the lands had escheated to the state. A review of this decision is now before the United States Supreme Court.

As early as 1907 attempts were made in the California legislature to pass bills to outlaw landholdings by persons of Japanese descent. Owing to the efforts of President Theodore Roosevelt the bills

did not then pass. The animus of the persons behind the anti-Japanese drive in the state legislature is illustrated by the following passage from an address by one of them: "I would rather," he told an audience, "every foot of California was in its native wilderness than to be cursed by the foot of these yellow invaders, who are a curse to the country, a menace to our institutions, and destructive of every principle of Americanism. I want no aliens, white, red, black or yellow to own a foot of land in the State of California." In 1913 agitation for state legislation reached the boiling point; President Wilson sent William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State, to confer with political leaders in California, in order to avoid, if possible, an "international incident." Federal intervention failed, and the 1913 bill passed.

The Japanese government lost no time in making firm protests. Mr. Bryan replied that the President and he had earnestly attempted to induce the state authorities to reconsider the matter. The federal government felt helpless because, under decisions of the Supreme Court, the alien's right to own or occupy land is determined by state law. All that the federal government can do is insist that the state observe treaty provisions.

California, as U. S. Webb, Attorney General of California in 1913, admitted, wanted to exclude Japanese from the state. It could not pass an exclusion act, but it did pass an act which, it was hoped, would tend to keep the Japanese from California. It was intended as a step in the direction of exclusion. (For a fuller account of the history of the California Alien Land Law, see "California's Prop-

osition 15" by Grace Cable Keroher in the Spring 1947 issue of *COMMON GROUND*.)

The laws of seven other states impose restrictions or prohibitions on aliens ineligible to citizenship as to taking and holding real estate; and, in addition, four states impose prohibitions or restrictions on aliens who have not declared their intention to become citizens (ineligible aliens cannot file such declarations of intention). Utah repealed its Alien Land Law in March 1947.

Some of these laws were challenged in cases brought to the Supreme Court, but the essential provisions of the acts were upheld by the court. The last important case involving an Alien Land Law was decided by the court in 1934. Now the court is being asked to reconsider these decisions and to hold these statutes unconstitutional.

It is argued that the California Alien Land Law discriminates against Japanese aliens on racial grounds; that it violates the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. In the absence of a "pressing public necessity," it is contended, a state may not make distinctions between groups of persons along racial lines. In the *Korematsu* case, the Japanese exclusion case of 1944, Mr. Justice Black said: "All legal restrictions which curtail the civil rights of a single racial group are immediately suspect." "Pressing public necessity," he said, "may sometimes justify the existence of such restrictions; racial antagonism never can." There is no pressing public necessity justifying the Alien Land Law; the earlier Supreme Court cases upholding this law and similar legislation in other states should be overruled.

The constitutional question involved in the *Oyama* case is complicated by the fact that the Alien Land Acts are related to the acts of Congress which exclude

certain racial groups from naturalization—the California act in effect provides that aliens whom Congress excludes from citizenship shall be excluded from landholding in California. What "pressing public necessity" is there for prohibiting aliens, only by reason of their race or color, from American citizenship? But the court may distinguish between the federal and state acts: Congress may have unlimited power to deal with naturalization, but a state's power in the regulation of legally admitted aliens or in the regulation of the ownership or occupancy of land is limited by the Fourteenth Amendment and by the power of Congress to control immigration.

It is obvious that a state's anti-alien laws affect immigration policy; for an alien will not go to a state where he may not earn a living by engaging in the calling for which he is especially qualified. As we have said, the California legislators hoped that the Alien Land Law would keep the Japanese out of California. The state may not enact an exclusion act. It should not be permitted to do by indirection what it may not do by direct means.

The Alien Land Laws are patently racist laws. They cannot be justified as furthering the public interest. The fact is that the Japanese in California, as long as no vigorous attempts were made to enforce the laws against them, took lands that white farmers would not take, and farmed these lands successfully. They grew lettuce, celery, peppers, strawberries, cucumbers, artichokes, cauliflower, spinach, and tomatoes in places where Caucasians did not want to waste their time. Although in 1941 the Japanese operated only 3.9 per cent of the California land in farms and harvested only 3.7 per cent of all crop land harvested, Japanese production, because of its intensive character, reached a value of \$35,000,000. Law-enforcement officials did not molest them. But now, after the tragedy and injustice of the West

Coast evacuation, there are powerful interests in California that want to prevent persons of Japanese descent from returning. They are using the Alien Land Law

as a Japanese exclusion act. The Supreme Court may see the reality through the legal clouds and hold the act unconstitutional.

• Round-Up •

CONDUCTED BY CAREY MC WILLIAMS

OF the round-up items for the last quarter, I have been most impressed with a little pamphlet based on some of the writings of George W. Cable on "the race question" ("A Southerner Looks at Negro Discrimination," International Publishers, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City, 15¢). These excerpts from articles which Cable wrote in the '80s and '90s state the case for federal intervention better than it has been stated during the intervening years. To Cable the matter of political enfranchisement and the protection of the Negro's civil rights were, by virtue of sheer social necessity, the logical first steps toward a solution of the problem, the steps upon which all other advancements necessarily rested. "The Southerner," he wrote, "forbids the freedman to go into the water until he is satisfied that he knows how to swim, and for fear that he should learn hangs millstones about his neck." Writing in the '80s, he pointed out that segregation reduces to half "all opportunity for those more reasonable and mutually acceptable self-assortments which public assemblages and groups of passengers find it best to make in all other enlightened countries." Who could offer an improvement today on his trenchant statement that "no party dare say that in these United States there is any room for any one class of citizens to fasten arbitrarily upon any other class of citizens a *civil status* from which no merit of intelligence, virtue, or possessions can

earn an extrication. We have a country large enough for all the unsociality anybody may want, but not for *incivility* either by or without the warrant of law."

To those Southerners of his day who urged that the solution of the race problem was "a matter of centuries rather than of decades," Cable pointed out that the steps which they recommended were not logical but geological. He warned that by its failure to protect the civil rights of Negroes the South was incurring far greater risks than could possibly be involved in immediate action. "For we have a case before us," he wrote, "wherein there is all danger and no safety in floating with the tide." Cable urged that the federal government should give the southern states a definite period of time within which to make a substantial start toward the elimination of Jim Crow practices. If the South had not made a substantial start by the end of this period, then he recommended that the federal government intervene to restore constitutional government "peaceably, promptly, and forever." Every word of this pamphlet is as pertinent today as when the original articles were published. Nothing that the current crop of southern liberals has had to offer in the way of program or policy begins to compare in practical statesmanship with the policy that Cable urged so eloquently. I recommend this pamphlet in its entirety to the President's Committee on Civil Liberties.

Lloyd H. Fisher has prepared for the American Council on Race Relations an excellent pamphlet, based on materials collected by Joseph Weckler about three areas of racial conflict in Los Angeles ("The Problem of Violence," American Council on Race Relations, 32 West Randolph Street, Chicago 1, 25¢). The Watts area is a section of Los Angeles that is rapidly becoming a segregated Negro community; the Hollenbeck area, on the East Side, is a Mexican-Jewish-Negro working-class district; while the West Jefferson area is a district into which middle-class Negroes have begun to infiltrate. What distinguishes the pamphlet from most studies of a similar sort is its refreshing candor and sharp realism. For example, Fisher shows that conflict characterizes the three areas but that the pattern of conflict varies in relation to the socio-economic or class differential. "If it is race which determines the adversaries," he writes, "it is class which determines the weapons." He points out that the reason why the two working-class districts have been largely unaffected by most "inter-racial" activity is that the interracial organizations are premised upon the assumption that their main function is the prevention of violence. However important this function may be, such an objective cannot square with the immediate needs of working-class Mexicans and Negroes who are interested, not in the sublimation, but in the satisfaction of these needs. Hence the intelligent, well-organized middle-class Negroes of the West Jefferson district, by sharing the premises of their white middle-class counterparts, have placed themselves in a position where they cannot provide leadership for the lower-class Negroes. "Most organizations," writes Fisher, "have a core of hostility." In the Watts and Hollenbeck districts, this principle of organization should be given explicit recognition. In such areas what is needed

is a sensible and rational means-ends apparatus, that is, organization, that would make it possible to harness the social energy of the mass and direct this social energy (or hostility, if you will) toward the attainment of immediate objectives—housing, jobs, sewer facilities, streets, etc. The pamphlet also contains many shrewd insights into the character of Mexican-Negro relations in Los Angeles and provides an excellent analysis of the reasons for retarded social organization among working-class Mexicans. It is also notable for its careful avoidance of social welfare clichés and the damnable vocabulary of social work. The writing is terse, simple, and direct.

The American Council on Race Relations has issued two additional documents of great interest. One is the summary of the excellent public-relations workshop which June Blythe organized for the Council in September, 1946 ("Public Relations Workshop Summary," American Council on Race Relations, 32 W. Randolph Street, Chicago 1, 75¢). The organization of this conference was a model of what such organization should be. Miss Blythe first sent a questionnaire to most of the interracial organizations, asking certain specific questions about their public-relations programs and techniques. The summary of these responses then constituted the basis for the work of the conference. The responses indicated that most of the organizations had extremely inefficient hit-or-miss public-relations programs. Techniques so peculiarly adapted to localized use as direct mail and pamphlets were, for example, nearly monopolized by national organizations. The summary also showed that a very inadequate use was being made of radio and that some of the best films were not being used at all. The discussions at the conference brought out quite clearly that an enormous amount of money is being currently

wasted in "promoting" better race relations. I liked, in particular, Leo P. Crespi's caustic comments (pp. 45-49) on the grotesquely inept ballyhoo of the last Brotherhood Week campaign. Mr. Crespi is, I believe, thoroughly justified in saying that it is a very serious question whether this promotion, which involved an enormous amount of money, accomplished anything in the way of desirable results.

The other American Council publication is a memorandum prepared by Dr. Arnold M. Rose entitled "Studies in Reduction of Prejudice" (price \$1). While Dr. Rose has done a scholarly, thoroughgoing job, I must say that the first section of his memorandum is a nearly perfect illustration of the blind-alley in which many social scientists have been burrowing for the last decade. The section is devoted to a summary of various researches into the question of whether courses in race relations, etc., actually bring about changes in attitudes, and, if so, by what degree, as revealed by applications of the Bogardus social distance test, the Thurstone equal-appearing intervals scale, and the Hinckley scale. Frankly, I don't know what conclusions can be drawn from Dr. Rose's summary of this elaborate research. For after twenty years of measuring, testing, and scoring, the findings are basically conflicting and inconsistent. "Some school or college courses dealing with ethnic problems have effected significant changes in attitudes on the part of students, others have not. . . ." Direct contact between members of antagonistic groups has and has not promoted friendlier attitudes. Some studies have shown a correlation between friendly attitudes and knowledge about ethnic groups; other studies, bolstered up by an equal appearance of scholarship, have demonstrated the opposite. Quite apart from the question of how accurate these various tests and measures-

of-attitudes really are—and it is a very serious question indeed—it is apparent that the focus of such studies has been entirely too narrow and that the theoretical premises upon which they have been based are utterly inadequate.

What the studies indicate, if they indicate anything, is simply that educational techniques alone cannot eliminate prejudice—a proposition which has long been axiomatic with many investigators working without benefit of a costly and time-consuming research apparatus. If half the time, energy, and money that has gone into this type of research had been focused upon a study of social relationships and upon a study of the functioning of our society as a whole, it could have been demonstrated: (a) that correct information alone will not change—except slightly—beliefs which find "common sense" verification in a set of existing relationships; (b) that courses premised upon the assumption that "differences" create prejudice cannot hope to succeed; and (c) that the re-education of the prejudiced should be premised upon a realistic explanation of social relationships in a contradiction-ridden society.

By these comments, I do not mean to disparage the value of Dr. Rose's summary, for he is quite well aware of the impasse that exists in this type of research today. After pointing out the inadequacies of the existing studies and emphasizing the kind of large-scale co-operative research that might offer better results, he raises the pertinent question (p. 19): "Is not our untested knowledge and wisdom sufficiently useful, and our funds so limited, that whatever funds we do have should go into action programs rather than into research?" Of particular value is his summary of various "theories of prejudice," which I highly recommend, for it shows, in the most graphic way, the theoretical inconsistencies and

contradictions which exist in the social sciences today on the subject of prejudice.

Having long been obsessed with the importance of the contribution that law can make to the solution of problems of discrimination, I should like to pay a tribute here to the work of the late Alexander H. Pekelis, who, better than any one else, brought social science insights to the study of legal aspects of discrimination and demonstrated what a superb instrument the law can be in the fight against prejudice. I have written elsewhere that the brief which Pekelis filed in the Westminster school case is by all odds the finest exposition of the evils of segregation, from a socio-legal point of view, yet written in this country. Never before, to my knowledge, have the real issues in segregation been presented to the courts as sharply and as pointedly as in this brief. Pekelis was a social realist who took nothing for granted, critically examined every assumption, carefully tested every proposition, and was never blinded by abstractions. One of his finest contributions was the brief that he prepared for the American Jewish Congress in opposition to the application of the Daily News for a radio permit from the FCC. This brief represents a perfect fusion of legal and social insights. The discussion of freedom of speech and freedom of the air will, I think, long be regarded as a minor classic; and I would question that any propaganda expert in the social sciences could have done a better job in exposing the policy of the Daily News in the treatment of minority groups. When the Supreme Court reverses, as it must, such wrong-headed decisions as *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, I predict that it will lean heavily on the sturdy logic and vigorous analysis which Pekelis provided. The American Jewish Congress (212 West 50th Street, New York 10) is to be congratulated on making available to the general reading

public the briefs which Pekelis and Will Maslow prepared in the Daily News and Westminster cases.

The AJC has also issued an excellent little pamphlet by Gordon W. Allport and Bernard M. Kramer on "The Roots of Prejudice" (American Jewish Congress, Office of Jewish Information, 1834 Broadway, New York 23, 10¢). Based on a study involving 437 college undergraduates, the pamphlet sheds real light on the roots of prejudice. It implies that "the threads of hostility are lock-stitched into the fabric of personality"; hence prejudice against certain ethnic groups cannot be divorced from the general system-of-ideas of which it is a part. In short, prejudice is part of a broader system of ideas which is, of course, the ideology of reaction. Messrs. Allport and Kramer are a little cagey about this theory and adopt it only by indirection, that is, by attributing it to others whom they cite with apparent approval. "They"—referred to these other investigators—"argue that it is not enough to isolate single factors which seem positively to have caused prejudice, and to attempt to reinforce this or that particular factor in action programs. Rather, they say, remedial work requires therapy for the individual as a whole, a "modification of his total outlook, a recasting of his style of life." (This statement should be compared, for example, with the approach used in some of the studies of reduction of prejudice summarized by Dr. Rose, most of which are based on a directly contrary assumption.) If this be true—and I think it is true—then the argument should be pushed one all-important step further by recognizing that "therapy for the individual as a whole" cannot be effected without a drastic re-vamping of the relationships and the social structure which make the prejudiced person what he is. I derived particular relish from Allport and Kramer's demon-

stration that individuals who say "laws can't change human nature" are individuals who, on other counts, have been found to be prejudiced. This familiar argument is, therefore, largely sheer rationalization.

Allport and Kramer's emphasis on therapy for the individual as a whole constitutes a nice preface to a fine pamphlet by H. A. C. Dobbs on "Operational Research and Action Research" issued by the Institute of Ethnic Affairs (500 Otis Building, 810 18th Street, NW, Washington 6, D.C., 25¢). The pamphlet is devoted to an exposition of integrated action research, which might otherwise be described as the application of technology to problem-solving (by "technology" I mean organized co-operative integrated research directed toward the solution, in action, of particular problems). The case for "operational research" could not be demonstrated more vividly than by reference, once again, to the impasse which the "social distance" researchers have encountered in their isolated studies in the reduction of prejudice. For what these studies lack is precisely integration with other disciplines directed toward, not the answer of abstract questions, but the solution of particular problems. The pamphlet is of great importance, for it is addressed to one phase of the great issue of our times—how to harness technology and planning in a democratic society. In an interesting introduction, John Collier makes the point which Dr. Robert Lynd

demonstrated so brilliantly in *Knowledge for What?*—namely, the reluctance of American social scientists to deal with wholes rather than with fragments; their determination to avoid, if possible, "the inescapable inter-relatedness of things."

"Men cannot live without a feeling—" writes Collier, "some kind of feeling—of belongingness, of power. When belongingness, power, wholeness are unattainable in the work sphere, in the political sphere, in the lapsed local community, on any line truthful and benign, then inevitably the remaining possible ways to attain these essential ingredients are resorted to. Most of these other available ways—drink, obsessive pursuit of sex, spectator-sportsmanship—are of a rather neutral significance, mere dissolutive substitutes for the spiritual nurture that our age denies its men and women. But very wide in the world today is another substitute, groupings of hate, groupings of fear, groupings of scorn: the fascisms which threaten all our remaining hopes. In fascism, the withdrawal of significant wholeness from human life has its terminus. To recapture for human effort—for human life—the master quality, the supremely necessary ingredient, of wholeness: this is the overriding task of the epoch of revolution which is upon us. Not that life shall have abundance of physical goods, and not that life shall have material security, but that life shall be meaningful: this is the central need of the human being."

• The Common Council at Work •

"OVERCOMING GROUP PREJUDICE" is the subject of a foreign-language editorial contest being sponsored by the Council. The Council is offering a first prize of \$100, a second prize of \$50, and a third prize of \$25 for the best editorials on this topic printed in a foreign-language newspaper in the United States from May 1 to July 4, 1947, inclusive.

A distinguished group of Americans have agreed to act as judges: Seymour Berkson, General Manager of the International News Service; Erwin D. Canham, Editor of the Christian Science Monitor and First Vice-President of the American Society of Newspaper Editors; Earl G. Harrison, Dean of the University of Pennsylvania Law School and former U.S. Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization; Alvin Johnson, President Emeritus of the New School for Social Research; Anne O'Hare McCormick of the Editorial Board of the New York Times; and Elmo Roper, Director of the Fortune Survey of Public Opinion.

The contest, the Council hopes, will help to focus the attention of the millions of Americans who read foreign-language papers both on the prejudices which need to be overcome and the most effective ways of counteracting them.

THE COUNCIL is actively supporting two important bills on which the Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the House Judiciary Committee has been holding hearings this spring. The first of these, H.R. 2910, introduced by Rep. Stratton of Illinois, would authorize the admission as non-quota immigrants during the next four years of 400,000 displaced persons in Germany, Austria, or Italy. The bill, an emergency

measure, would in no way interfere with existing immigration laws. Those admitted under it would have to meet all the requirements of existing law, except quotas.

Legislation in behalf of displaced persons has been strongly urged both by President Truman and Secretary of State Marshall. The reasons why the Council believes the Stratton bill should be enacted are more fully discussed elsewhere in this issue in an article by William S. Bernard, Secretary of the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons, which heads the fight for H.R. 2910. The Council helped to organize the Citizens Committee, and Read Lewis, the Council's Executive Director, is serving as chairman of its Executive Committee. All Council members are strongly urged to write their Congressmen and Senators in support of this bill.

The other bill referred to above and supported by the Council, H.R. 2933, would broaden the authority of the Attorney General to suspend deportation in deserving cases. In particular it would extend his discretion to aliens racially ineligible to citizenship. This would enable the government to deal humanely with such tragic cases as Japanese treaty merchants, who have lived most of their lives in the United States, proved loyal to democratic ideals, and reared American citizen children to fight for our country. H.R. 2933 would also empower the Attorney General to suspend deportation in any deserving case in which the alien has lived continuously in the United States for ten years, and in many cases, for seven years. The bill was formulated by the Department of Justice after conferences with representatives of the Common Council

and other specially interested organizations, and the Council is urging its support. The provisions referred to represent an important forward step in the more humane administration of our immigration laws and in eliminating racial discriminations.

UNITED NATIONS EVENINGS, a series of weekly programs featuring arts and artists of many countries, were presented by the Council for 15 weeks beginning in late January. Dedicated to the United Nations and the one world idea, the programs aimed to give their audiences an opportunity of knowing and enjoying something of the arts and culture of peoples throughout the world. The Council is interested in promoting such experiments in intercultural understanding because it believes it is not so much through cold intellectual argument that people get

chords in all of us no matter how our cultural backgrounds vary.

More than 100 artists, coming from over 35 countries and all continents, contributed their services. The music ranged from Bach to Bali, from the art songs of Scandinavia to resistance songs of the Warsaw ghetto, from Icelandic to Hungarian folk songs, from the compositions of a modern Iranian composer to Latin-American music. There were East African tribal dances, Chinese sword dances, Scottish and Irish folk dances, modern Palestinian dances. Negro spirituals, Hindu customs, Japanese ballads, Brazilian folk songs were all movingly presented. The United Nations Chorus, composed of members of the U.N. secretariat, made its first public appearance. Among the speakers who participated were Norman Corwin, John Roy Carlson, John R. An-

du, Victor H. Bernstein, C. H. W. Haselriis, Jean Herbert, Bruno Lasker, Olga Lengyel, Leo J. Margolin, Angelica Mendoza, Arthur Miller, Liu Liang Mo, and Chester Williams. The audience responded enthusiastically not only to the individual performances but even more to the vision of one world which the programs projected. Some of the Evenings were forced to turn away several hundred people, even with an admission charge of \$1 to \$1.80 and although they had been moved to a larger auditorium. The programs were arranged by a committee headed by Ernest Roberts, Irving Palmer, and Jacques F. Ferrand.



Clemens Kalischer

PART OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHORUS COMPOSED OF STAFF MEMBERS OF THE U.N. AS THEY APPEARED AT ONE OF THE UNITED NATIONS EVENINGS

to know and appreciate each other, as through personal contacts and such warmly human mediums as music, the dance, and other arts, which strike responsive

THE COUNCIL'S RELEASES to the foreign-language press, translated each week

THE COMMON COUNCIL AT WORK

in 19 different languages, continue to be widely used by the 1,000 foreign-language publications in the United States. This educational service furnishes unbiased and timely material to foreign-language readers anxious to understand current problems and play their part in the main stream of American life. Recent articles have discussed such varied topics as Control of Atomic Energy, the Problem of the Turkish Straits, United States and the Trusteeship System, Treaties with the Satellite Countries, Social Security for Veterans' Dependents, U.S. Public Health Service in Action, State Fair Employment Laws, the Labor Injunction, the Consumers' Price Index, the Pros and Cons of Universal Military Training, I Am an American Day, 1947.

The Council's foreign-language press service is stressing at present the following major themes: the United Nations, American foreign policy and the fight for peace, better intergroup understanding, American democracy at work, American backgrounds and ideals, and the newcomer's special problems. As Dr. Carmichael, President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, recently urged, adult educational programs explaining the changing domestic and international scenes are desperately needed. Changes will not wait for the present generation of students to become molders of public opinion.

THE COUNCIL's foreign-language press exhibit, first presented at the United Nations at Lake Success in February, was shown by the New York Public Library in April. Arrangements are pending for its display in Washington.

IMMIGRATION PROBLEMS, difficult enough in ordinary times, are more numerous and complicated in the welter of uprootings and displacements resulting from

the war. Each month the Council advises hundreds of men and women anxious for help in uniting their families or becoming citizens. Many requests come from veterans. One of them recently presented this problem: "My fiancée is a native of Greece but has been living for a number of years in Paris. I want to bring her to this country and we plan to get married right after her arrival. I am told she can eventually become a citizen, but she has a six-year old son by a first marriage. I would like to adopt him after I marry his mother. Can she bring her boy into this country with her as a visitor?"

The Council assured him that our immigration laws would not interfere with a happy ending to his wartime romance. The Fiancée Law of 1946, he was told, would make it possible for his fiancée to come to this country to marry him, despite the exhaustion of the Greek quota. While the law makes no provision for the admission of the children of fiancées, it was suggested that she present her boy's case to the American consul in Paris. Since the boy was born in France and the French quota is not exhausted, our consul, it was believed, would issue the child an immigration visa, if the soldier would send the necessary affidavits of support.

HOW COMMON GROUND ARTICLES contribute to action programs is illustrated in the case of Carey McWilliams' "Minneapolis: The Curious Twin" which appeared in the Autumn 1946 issue. "The article got people to talking," wrote the Christian Science Monitor. "The author did for Minneapolis what no single person or group locally could ever have done without resentment and recriminations." The Monitor's article, describing developments in Minneapolis and the work of the Mayor's Committee on Human Relations, is printed on page 102.

• Miscellany •

COMMON GROUND readers who recall Carey McWilliams' piece in our Autumn 1946 issue, "Minneapolis—The Curious Twin," will be interested to read of its impact on Minneapolis and the work of the Mayor's Committee on Human Relations there. The *Christian Science Monitor* for March 29, under the heading, "Anti-Semitism Fought at Minneapolis," published this report:

SEVERAL months ago many citizens of Minneapolis were startled to learn that their city had been named the capital of anti-Semitism in the United States.

The indictment was made by Carey McWilliams, nationally known student of race relations.

Minneapolis' most widely read daily newspaper published a lengthy condensation of the indictment, that all Minneapolitans might know what an expert thought of their prejudices.

Reactions were of three kinds. There were those who were proud of the reputation and actually had fostered it. Among those were members of certain fundamentalist, religious sects. There were others who were well aware that the indictment was justified, and were ashamed. These citizens long had resented the discriminations practiced on all social levels by automobile and service clubs, which bar Jewish members, as well as the restaurants, hotels, and hospitals which close their doors to Negroes. There was a third large group of Minneapolitans, however, who were complacently unaware of the problem and just could not believe the indictment.

How, they wondered, could the largest city in one of the most progressive states in the Middle West have gotten that way? Particularly a city which had the best reputation in the United States for its

handling of Nisei concentration camp replacements and which had elected a Negro woman to its Library Board and recently had installed a Negro instructor in its State University.

Minneapolis' young and forward-looking Mayor Hubert Humphrey took nine months to make his own personal study of the problems, to decide on policies, and to select the personnel of his special committee. The committee, he decided, must be agreed on the principle of action. It should be small, so there would not be the buck-passing which often occurs in large committees, stifling action. It should be interracial, interclass, and interreligious. It should be free of professional workers whose loyalties might become confused. Its members must be independent, courageous, and devoted to the project.

When the committee first met in February, 1946, there was a lot of planning to do, for it had little experience of other groups to draw from. There was, however, the unfortunate experience of the Chicago group which had called in representatives of minority groups to present objective testimony on discriminations, only to discover that this was emotionally impossible. The inquiry turned into wrought-up sessions with the minorities on the offensive, the majority on the defensive, and nothing constructive accomplished. The Minneapolis committee did not wish to repeat this experience.

While the committee was breaking up into subcommittees for raising funds, planning techniques of integration, deciding on legislation it would support and housing problems it would try to solve, the news story about Minneapolis being the capital of anti-Semitism in the United States was published. The Mayor's Committee on Human Relations recognized

that the author did for Minneapolis what no single person or group locally could ever have done without resentment and recriminations.

The article got people to talking—people who had had nothing to do with any preliminary studies. Across dinner tables and in social groups the question kept arising—what is there to do about it? And those who had been briefed in groups which had been studying the question had some of the answers.

The housing committee had one of the toughest problems of all, because of restrictive covenants in many areas. The Real Estate Board offered its co-operation in listing restricted areas. When the problem was high lighted by the refusal to allow a Nisei veteran to buy a piece of land on which to build a house, many organizations, led by the American Veterans' Committee, went to bat. The public was aroused. The restrictive covenant was withdrawn.

The Mayor's Committee on Human Relations finally decided to undertake the formidable job of a community self-survey on minority problems. By having information on several areas of human relations, the committee then would be better armed for action.

The survey is being made by citizen-volunteers of Minneapolis, some 900 of them of many races and religions. Some are members of committees. Others are doing clerical work, and about 600 are going from door to door interviewing their fellow citizens.

Volunteers, who interview on the average of a dozen families, are learning all sorts of enlightening things about their fellow citizens. If the survey does nothing else, it will have acquainted 900 volunteers and their families and friends with the problems faced by their neighbors. These 900 citizens are doing more fundamental thinking about democracy than

they have ever done before. They now base their thinking on personal evidence and contacts and not just on hearsay.

But the Mayor's Committee on Human Relations does not expect to stop with that. It originally was pledged to action. It will bring the recommendations of the Social Science Institute of Fisk University before the policymakers of the community. Employers, unions, churches, schools, recreation agencies, housing authorities, hotels, restaurants, newspapers, hospitals, all will be challenged to help make Minneapolis the most truly democratic and tolerant city in the United States.

DR. ALICE M. BRUES reports in the American Journal of Physical Anthropology that the appearance of a "typical American" is that of an Irishman. This conclusion grows out of research on thousands of United States soldiers in an attempt to establish standard measurements of various types of faces in connection with the design of gas masks. All of the European types of faces were discovered in various localized groups here, each with different measurements from the average American. Only the Irish was lacking. And why? Says Dr. Brues: "One national extraction could not be classified—the Irish, who are equally common everywhere and hit the dead center of the American average in their measurements."

UNITARIAN WORKCAMPs, non-sectarian and interracial, offer volunteer summer service opportunities for an 8-week period during July and August. Three projects are planned for college-age groups (18-25), capacity 10 each: one in the interracial Sydenham Hospital in New York City, where the program will center on race relations and an interpretation of the hospital's work in the community; one in a mental hospital in Rhode Island, for institutional service and training; and

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a recreation project on Chicago's South Side, where opportunity for recreation supervision in a Negro community will be given. Evidence of hospital or social work or recreational leadership aptitudes is required for admission to these projects.

Senior Workcamps and service projects for ages 15-20 include a Detroit, Michigan, construction and child-care program at the Port Huron camp of the recreation department of the UAW-CIO, with opportunity to participate in labor courses and other phases of the education program of the union. Campers at another construction project at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee will build a concrete block nursery school for the town of Summerfield, and the educational program will include participation in courses offered by the school to southern trade union members. Still other projects are in Canada, Texas, and California. One construction Workcamp for ages 14 to 15 will be given in Greenfield, New Hampshire, for the general improvement of grounds and buildings of a settlement house summer camp.

Fees for maintenance and housing are about \$125 for the full 8-week period. A limited number of partial scholarships are available. Address inquiries to John K. Findly, Unitarian Service Committee, 9 Park Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts.

ENCAMPMENT FOR CITIZENSHIP begins its second season at the Fieldston School, Riverdale, New York, on June 30 and continues to August 9. Its aim is to help prepare young Americans for responsible, informed leadership and effective citizenship. Its base in this attempt is a diversified self-governing community of young people. Last year the group of 128 included 59 boys and 69 girls, ranging in age from 17 to 23. They came from 27

states in the South, East, Midwest, and Far West. Among them were 22 Negroes, 3 Nisei, 2 Mexican Americans. There were 8 Catholics, 30 Jews, and 87 of different Protestant denominations. There were farmers, laborers, students, rural and city people, white-collar workers, teachers, divinity students, musicians, social workers, lawyers, housewives, writers. The 175 planned for this year will be equally diversified, it is hoped.

The educational program includes lectures and discussions, research trips in the New York area, films, workshops, and recreation directed toward a clarification of the meaning of democracy, a study of economic, political, social, and international issues, and training in the strategy of citizenship—techniques for organization, co-operation, influence.

The fee is \$125 per camper for the 6 weeks, including tuition and living expenses. It can be paid by the individual, by a sponsoring agency, or by scholarship aid from the Encampment. For further information and application blanks write Encampment for Citizenship, 2 West 64 Street, New York 23.

THE BUREAU FOR INTERCULTURAL Education (1697 Broadway, New York 19) has published a useful new bibliography: "Films in Intercultural Education." In addition to a description of the films, the bibliography includes information about where they may be obtained, approximate costs, and suggestions for classroom use. This bibliography meets a real need, with the number of short features in the field growing steadily and the general public making far too little use of them or entirely unaware that they exist. Available from the Bureau's Clearing House, Department M, at 10 cents a copy.

• The Bookshelf •

CONDUCTED BY HENRY C. TRACY

TOWARD A MORAL WORLD

HUMAN DESTINY. By Lecomte du Noüy. New York: Longmans, Green. 289 pp. \$3.50.

If we defer to a top-ranking bio-physicist, Lecomte du Noüy, the author of *Human Destiny*, we are persuaded that by no possibility could the complexities of a protein molecule or of a particle of living substance have been built up without the intervention of a telefinal agent—Eddington's anti-chance—or, as he prefers to call it, God. Against a backdrop of twelve hundred million years, the author traces the progress of an evolutive force creating plant and animal forms, each successive kind with a larger liberty than its precursor. But that greater freedom was, until the appearance of man, physical. Given the power of choice and perception of "good" and "bad," man became morally free. That he has abused this freedom proves to the author that his evolution is incomplete; awaits the appearance of "mutants" who have the conscience and the will to resist all instincts or impulses that make men the slaves of their passions. Every act of self-discipline on the part of those now living makes the world more favorable for the survival of such mutants who, until now, have been molested or destroyed for the very virtues they bring to this troubled earth. We have a long way to go toward so moral a world. But in this view, mutants belong to no special class, color, nation, or faith. All such distinctions mar and imperil the destiny of our one spiritually human race.

T. V. Smith, philosopher and proponent of democratic faith, says in *Atomic Power and Moral Faith* (Claremont Col-

lege. \$2): "Men are born as animals with the mission laid upon them to become spirits, on pains of ending where they began, as animals." He brands aggressive use of atomic power as an appeal to cowardice and indicates where courage may be found to fortify moral faith.

George A. Lundberg in *Can Science Save Us?* (Longmans, Green. \$1.75) defends sociology, treated as a science, for its value in solving moral problems, and deplores the cleavage between our attitude toward the rest of nature and our moralistic thought-ways which bar human relations from the field of science.

American Thought-1947, an anthology (Gresham Press. \$3.75), collects fruit of hard thinking on thirty-two major subjects. A small library in itself, it gives an over-all American view of major problems in art, literature, economics, education, international affairs, labor, science, sociology, psychology, and other prime concerns of a dynamic civilization.

Henry C. Link's *The Rediscovery of Morals* (Dutton. \$2.50) is best on racial issues, less objective in treating of class conflicts. He finds the causes of social tension moral rather than economic. Spread of race-hate is the result of failure to teach respect for the dignity of man, who "has no dignity except in relation to some moral order or set of spiritual values."

V. T. Thayer in *Religion in Public Education* (Viking. \$2.75) gives the arguments for and against religious instruction in elementary and secondary schools; concludes that if made an integral part of the program, it might fail to promote desired ends; offers positive suggestions for char-

acter education avoiding sectarian conflicts and complications.

Karl B. Justus, three years a chaplain with combat troops in the Pacific, found basic religion alive in the fighting men; came home to find a formalized faith, pal-

lid idealism, indifference to human needs, and sectarianism rampant; and wrote *What's Wrong With Religion* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce. \$2). A plea for unity among faiths and a religion effective in human living.

OF PEOPLE AND THEIR FREEDOMS

Fourth of the Yankee City Series, W. Lloyd Warner and J. O. Low's *The Social System of the Modern Factory* (Yale University Press. \$3) tells the story of factory workers who had lost their freedom and struck to regain it—in a town without a union, where (it was said) a strike could never be. Workers of various stocks—Yankee, Irish, French Canadian, Jewish, Polish, Armenian, and Greek—with no previous sense of solidarity as Americans acted as a body, and won. Why? Search for the answer takes the authors back 300 years to the founding of the town (1635) when families made their own shoes; on through successive phases, including mechanization (1852), to absentee ownership, industrial hierarchy, and suppression of skills, to final neglect of basic human needs. All America is involved in similar struggles; hence the value of this fine analysis of the people's case.

Folk songs are a part of a people's psychic history. Recording those native to our people took John A. Lomax through the Far West and the Deep South. He tells his experiences in *Adventures of a Ballad Hunter* (Macmillan. \$3.75). Touched in youth by songs he heard from boys on the cattle-trail near his Texas home, he won recognition for them (thanks to Harvard's Barrett Wendell and George Kittredge) and published *Cowboy Songs*—first American

folk songs printed with music; and made it his life mission to find and save the best of our home-grown ballads, work songs, melodies, Negro songs, spiritual and "sinful." The quest for these makes a rousing tale of adventure happily told. Mr. Lomax is honorary consultant to the Library of Congress, and honorary curator of its Archive of American Folk Song, to which he contributed more than 10,000 recordings.

Robert Goffin's story of Louis Armstrong's rise to fame, in *Horn of Plenty* (Allen, Towne & Heath. \$3), is a gust of drama that leaves one breathless. Born in the vilest slum, reared in New Orleans' tenderloin district, the child heard at Funky Butt's Dance Hall the rhythms that woke the throb of tomtoms in his blood. With it woke the ruling passion for music that carried him through assorted hells to highest laurels in Chicago, New York, London, and Paris. Goffin, writing like one possessed, makes us feel every tug of torment and thrill of triumph in the drama.

After such a tornado as the Armstrong saga, it is quieting to read Dave Dexter's expertly organized *Jazz Cavalcade* (Criterion Music Corp. \$3), an objectively written biography of the music itself rather than of its leading exponents, whose contribution is featured—what they achieved in behalf of jazz—rather than their personal lives. As Orson Welles

says in a Foreword, the jazz cultists are not going to like this book. It is too sane; presents jazz musicians as serious professionals, not in the "melodramatic image of a weird and reefer-ridden merry-andrew."

Cultists may prefer *Really the Blues*, by Mezz Mezzrow and Bernard Wolfe

(Random House. \$3). If one can get past the expert and experiential account of incidents in dives, jails, bawdy-houses, and bordellos in the first third of the book, there is genuine lore of jazz music and genius to be had here, with full credit to the Negro's supremacy in this form.

CULTURE'S COAT OF MANY COLORS

That there could be so many kinds of culture—or want of it—in a United States often reproached for its standardized behavior, we never knew till we read Lili Foldes' *Two on a Continent* (Dutton. \$3). The "two" are Andor Foldes, concert pianist, and his wife Lili, both from Hungary, whose wholly fresh discovery of America is unique of its kind. In striving to become a part of America, they met with adventures so amazing, stupefying, enchanting, heartbreaking, and variously fantastic that their story, inimitably well told, is something neither an old nor a new American would want to miss.

More prosaic but highly informative are stories told by Maurice R. Davie in *Refugees in America* (Harper. \$4.50) of persons of all classes who doffed their coat of European culture to don a garb suited to whatever niche they could find in the States. Heartening, too; for unlike the earlier immigrants, whose manual labor was always in demand, these later comers found little market for their gifts, yet with a fine courage adapted themselves from mental to menial work and lost no self-respect in the change. A janitor, they noted, speaks to his boss in the same tone he uses for a fellow worker. When there's a knock at the door, one reports (with relief): "It is the laundryman, and not the

Gestapo." Davie also tells instances of deliberate attempts to foster enmity by the false rumor that many Americans have been displaced by refugee workers.

My American Pilgrimage (Little, Brown. \$2.50) is Stoyan Christowe's warm individual story of immigrant years when he did indeed find work aplenty, but of a deadening kind from which he escaped under the tutelage of the wise Pascal, a fellow national from Macedonia, who told him, "Through the language you will learn America. . . . Study it well." How well the author heeded this counsel, every page of his facile writing shows.

Montana Margins, by Joseph Kinsey Howard (Yale University Press. \$4.50), springs from a Montana study, directed by Baker Brownell, in quest of cultural sources of inspiration *native to the region*, for the enrichment of family and community life. The participative attitude is encouraged by use of fact and legend readers identify with their own backgrounds; lore of Indians, cowboys, homesteaders, miners, and the like; with a good sprinkling of social life, humor, and fun.

Bruce Nelson's *Land of the Dacotahs* (University of Minnesota Press. \$3.75) follows time back to trace successive waves of Stone Age hunters from the Asian mainland for the origin of the

Dacotahs, known as Sioux; gives us the scene when their Seven Council Fires ruled a domain then untouched by a plow; portrays the tragic white conquest, the plow, the dust-bowl, and predatory townsmen exploiting the farmer by cornering his grain. Here's the truth about the Non-Partisan League, and a forecast of what remains to be done to redress ills and past injustices. Fine in spirit, scholarly, vivid; an outstanding book.

Grant Foreman's *The Last Trek of the Indians* (Chicago University Press. \$4) untangles the complicated pattern of migrations, some voluntary, mainly forced, that brought fifty-five tribes of first Americans together in Oklahoma. Although a factual narrative without emotional bias, disclosures of ruthless treatment by encroaching whites are often appalling. Unable to cope with a "superior" race, many were defrauded, denuded of stock, timber, land, and denied the education they had been promised.

As Evelyn C. Adams shows in *American Indian Education* (King's Crown Press. \$2.25), Indian education trailed the public school system with scant relation to Indian needs. But with the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, ancient values of indigenous culture were at last recognized—thanks largely to aid from anthropologists—and since then the program has been reoriented.

Marion L. Starkey's fine history of *The Cherokee Nation* (Knopf. \$3.50) tells of an exiled people driven from their Georgia homes by white greed; records great characters among them, notably that of Sequoia, a tribal Prometheus who created a syllabic alphabet (syllabary) of the Cherokee tongue, resulting in a drive for self-education and a spur to self-respect. Some exiles from Georgia returned from the West, were accepted in North Carolina, live there quietly today.

Clyde Kluckhohn, Harvard anthropol-

ogist, and Dorothea Leighton, psychiatrist, collaborate in *The Navaho*, a study in socio-cultural trends (Harvard University Press. \$4.50). Its aim is to evaluate the whole Indian administrative program in respect to effects of its present policy on Indians as individuals. Economy, social relationships, ceremonials, language, attitudes toward government, toward the supernatural, and other values are among the topics covered, with recommended corrections where needed.

Famed also as a dancer, it was as an anthropologist (as such, well known) that Katherine Dunham made her *Journey to Accompong* (Holt. \$2.50), and it is as a responsive human being as well as a scientist that she tells of thirty days with the Maroons, a tribe descended from escaped slaves of Spanish days. In the hilly backlands they kept alive primitive African ways and traditions. Of these she gives a lively account. Initiation into the Obi magic cult—on the 29th day—sealed her complete acceptance by the tribe.

With fine objectivity, Vincenzo Petruccio in *Puerto Rican Paradox* (University of Pennsylvania Press. \$3) gives us his analysis of the unrest, the passion for independence, of a people dwelling in a land designed by nature for harmony and peace. A trained anthropologist, Petruccio reports the spectacular cultural harmony achieved among a mixed black, white, and mulatto population where each is simply a Puerto Rican, and where no one thinks of the darker citizen as inferior, or in terms of menace or fear. A fine analysis of culture conflicts and nationalism.

The Stricken Land, ex-Governor Rexford Guy Tugwell's report on Puerto Rico (Doubleday. \$4.50), presents an administrator's view. Lavish in episodes and interviews bearing on his great effort for reforms, it may baffle the reader who wants the problem simplified. Its great merit is that the author goes below the

surface to relate the island's ills to larger lesions that sicken economy and retard welfare the world over. Co-operation, not competition, is his key to remedial measures.

Cuban Counterpoint, by Fernando Ortiz (Knopf. \$4), presents tobacco and sugar as cultural factors in the life of a people. Scholarly, urbane, humorous, the author favors tobacco, linking sugar with the woes of enslaved Africans who were "deracinated, wounded, shattered, like the cane in the fields, and like it crushed to extract the juice of their labor." Ortiz, anthropologist, is known for his work on Afro-Cuban origins, lore, and beliefs.

Erna Fergusson's *Cuba* (Knopf. \$3.75) blends keen observation with insight into the life of a people in part sophisticated, in part primitive, whose distrust of all government stems from too long a rule by Spain, whose colonial agents they had to outwit. Unused to democratic ways, they yet respond to honest leadership when it is found.

Trinidad Village, by Melville J. and Frances S. Herskovits (Knopf. \$4.75), is

a study of Negro communities away from industrial contact, far inland. It notes a new factor in cultural change—an inner force, selective in character, that reinterprets new elements in terms of the old. One sect accepts Gospel hymns, but in accelerated rhythm-beats that induce excitement and "possession" like the magic of African drums. All social activities are so reinterpreted, thus shielding an inner core of tradition from destruction by new forms.

George Grosz calls his autobiography *A Little Yes and a Big No* (Dial. \$7.50). From his text and sketches one gets a strong sense of an unlovely Germany that he knew in decadence, 1920 to 1940. As a caricaturist, he had been a mocker of the German middle class and institutions in a vein of vitriolic and bitter satire. In America he hoped to be a "free" artist, see life and death as subjects for real painting, not cheap jokes. This bred an inner conflict not yet wholly resolved. Grosz admits the book's title reflects his past, not his present attitude, which is: "Life is more beautiful if you say YES instead of NO."

ONE WORLD—OF MANY CREEDS AND COLORS

In *The World and Africa*, W. E. Burghardt DuBois (Viking. \$3) lays the foundation for a new social and ethical pattern in which Europe and America must join with Africa and Asia to save the world from ruin. Too long "a continent without a history," Africa here finds its strategic position in world affairs stated, and highlighted by the collapse of European civilization—a downfall in part due to vicious colonial policies and greed for profit and power through exploitation. Grounded in science, fortified by intensive

research, the book is vital and stimulating.

Edmund D. Soper's *Racism: A World Issue* (Abingdon-Cokesbury. \$2.50) gives a world picture of tensions that exist in the main geographic areas where race conflicts have arisen or are imminent, with underlying causes and conditions. Based on seminars conducted in Midwest cities, this survey provides an objective view and exposes dogmatic fallacies.

Samuel Tenenbaum's *Why Men Hate* (Beechhurst Press. \$3.50) exposes the incredible stupidities that accompany race-

hate and the horrors and indecencies that result from them. Not neglected here is the fantastic and laughable side of the picture, showing the lengths to which self-deception can be carried. The psychology of racism is well handled. The closing section discusses means of remedy.

Goodwin Watson's *Action for Unity* (Harper. \$2) is a manual in the field of race relations, discussing organizations now working—their effectiveness and possible co-ordination—and techniques of proved value. A practical guide in combatting prejudice, it is the outgrowth of work of the Commission on Community Interrelations of the American Jewish Congress.

Into the Main Stream, by Charles Johnson and Associates (Chapel Hill. \$3.50), surveys the best practices in race relations in the South. While news sheets feature demagoguery and conflict, the better practices go on: in housing, health, citizenship, and the molding of attitudes, through hundreds of agencies.

Earl Conrad, a journalist, writing *Jim Crow America* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce. \$3) covers the field of Negro-white relations from firsthand experience and a personal drive against the white supremacist credo. He finds the "Negro question" primarily one of exploitive economy backed by mis-notions traceable to slavery.

The problem of *Latin Americans in Texas*, as stated by Pauline R. Kibbe (University of New Mexico Press. \$3.50), calls for right understanding of our Latin Americans, their background, national and occupational characteristics, and traits and tendencies arising from their historic past. Miss Kibbe's book, recent winner of one of the Anisfield-Wolf awards for books adjudged best in the field of race relations, provides just this understanding in a fine analysis.

Americans, by Major Orville C. Shirey (Infantry Journal Press. \$5), is the story

of the 442nd Combat Team: Nisei Americans. We have heard of their proved loyalty before; but, with this point-by-point narrative of campaigns in Italy and France, it sinks in. Here are scores of instances of heroism, resourcefulness, and devotion, a loyalty to the death. Every page is a direct hit on the target—the right of these Nisei to be known and treated as Americans without reserve.

Unity and Difference in American Life, edited by R. M. MacIver (Harper. \$2), follows two volumes on Group Relations issued by the Institute for Religious and Social Studies; this time from the standpoint of the unity of America rather than intergroup relations as such. Schools, the press, business, the courts, and the common citizen are all invoked to remedy faults of disunity in the nation's thinking.

Foundations of Democracy, edited by F. Ernest Johnson (Harper. \$2), prints addresses dealing with the crisis in modern democracy, bearing on the intellectual confusion of our time, with some stress on the fallacy that the issue between collectivism and democracy is equivalent to antagonism between ours and the Soviet republics. Scholarly and provocative.

North Star Shining, by Hildegard Swift and Lynd Ward (Morrow. \$2.50), is a poetic and graphic history of the American Negro; covers the gamut of emotional life from the depths of slavery to the heights of freed spirit expressed by heroes in the late war. Lynd Ward's illustrations, both in black and white and in color, perfectly reflect each mood.

All turmoil of race and hate drops behind as we enter Langston Hughes' *Fields of Wonder*, a book of lyric poems (Knopf. \$2.50). Pioneering in brevity of poetic expression, Hughes has caught in fewest words an elusive meaning, a surprise, a wordless wonder; held it for an instant and let it go, leaving but a slight imprint on the page. But his imprint, by some

magic, makes a poet of the man who reads. This is a height few lyricists have attained.

Like the Great Rift Valley that runs the length of Africa, from south to north, a divisive line of cleavage—the color line—ran through Countee Cullen's heart. Poems collected just before his death in 1946, *On These I Stand* (Harper. \$2.50),

show that the rift was never healed. A true poet, known and esteemed for twenty years, he wrote of "the far, illimitable wonderments of earth," but mingled stinging irony and sorrow's wisdom with his songs. His later poems are shadowed with the tragic sense. All's lost, he seems to say, "—when once an atom cracks the heart."

FRESH APPROACHES IN FICTION

Writers have begun to roll up the heavy artillery in the fight against racial and religious bigotry. Last autumn we had Margaret Halsey's *Color Blind*. This spring the novelists have swung into action. The heaviest barrage comes from Sinclair Lewis in *Kingsblood Royal* (Random House. \$3). Blond Neil Kingsblood, young, secure in a promising banking job, happy with wife and child, traveling with the "best" crowd in Grand Republic, Minnesota, discovers that his great-great-grandfather was a full-blooded Negro. Psychically undone, he sets out to re-orient himself in a strange and bewildering new world of which he had had no inkling. The Negroes he comes to know are warmly human, and Lewis gives them real dimension. Against the whites Lewis is venomous and ruthless, portraying them with slashing satire as shallow and bigoted, devoid of any sense of real values. There will be those who recoil from the book, insisting that the picture of the prejudiced whites is overdrawn, but Lewis is an old hand at throwing cleansing and pitiless light on the dark places in American life, at magnifying a situation until we are inescapably shocked into sight.

In Laura Z. Hobson's *Gentleman's Agreement* (Simon and Schuster. \$2.75),

newspaperman Phil Green searches for an angle from which to write a series on anti-Semitism—one which they'll read. After weeks of frustration, the "idea" hits him like a bolt: "I Was Jewish for Eight Weeks." To write under that caption he has to stake friendship, love, his career—everything—and be it; take day by day the little insults, "the tapping on nerves, the delicate assault on the proud stuff of a man's identity." The complications that ensue test every talent of a gifted author. Our betrayal of the plot gives no hint of the book's impact, nor of the sensitivity of the handling. This is the clash of faiths, seen as a Christian's problem.

In Nevil Shute's *The Chequer Board* (Morrow. \$2.75), the clash is one of race. A veteran sets out to find the fate of fellow victims in one of war's mischances. The case of a British pilot, shamelessly deserted by a wife of his own race, is outstanding. Downed in Burma, he throws in his lot with the Burma Independence Army. His contacts with the men, his meeting with a Burmese girl whose essential culture somewhat exceeds his own, the dawning of love and subsequent union, is the finest picture of *transculturation* (Ortiz' new word for it) yet

to appear in fiction, and has the convincing quality of a case history. Shute was there, as a correspondent; knows Burma, knows whereof he is writing.

Another angle of the same drive is in Bernice Kelly Harris' *Janey Jeems* (Doubleday. \$2.50), a deeply human novel of the Carolina hill country, in which the author never mentions the fact that the characters in the story are Negroes. And why should she? Struggle and happiness won out of hardship is just human experience, the same for all races.

Elizabeth H. Emerson's *The Good Crop* (Longmans, Green. \$2.50) recreates imaginatively the trek of the Rees family from Tennessee to Indiana, where they join their colony of Friends and start a new life. A novel of great charm.

As for juveniles, writers now deal with problems those of Louisa Alcott's day knew nothing of.

In *Tradition*, by Anne Emery (Vanguard. \$2.50), the moving of a Nisei family into a race-conscious neighborhood creates a stir of prejudice at home and at school. How the family copes with it in both places makes the story. Told in teen-age idiom, with color and snap, it works up to a satisfying climax, but not without brisk fighting and strategy on the right side, in social affairs, sports, friendships, and the routine life of the school.

Willow Hill, by Phyllis A. Whitney (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.50), won the \$3,500 prize in the Youth Today Contest. Read but a dozen pages and you will know why. It has an expert touch and keen insight into a high school girl's mind. The problem here is Negro families brought in by a government housing project. Prejudice, cutting right through friendships thought secure—but never mind, this has to be read. Lillian Smith

calls it "a corking good story," and that's just what it is.

Long a leader in the new kind of writing that leads young people into an understanding of the problems their elders haven't solved and they must solve, Florence Crannell Means adds *Great Day in the Morning* to her list (Houghton Mifflin. \$2). On the Carolina coast race prejudice is a diffused one, the pressure of it felt, but the power of it not known till a colored girl, eager to teach, finds that race-hate makes decent white folk morally guilty of murder.

Michael's Victory, a story Clara Ingram Judson dug up from incidents in Ohio's history (Houghton Mifflin. \$2), gives us the O'Haras fresh from the famine in Ireland, and Michael at fifteen tasting the rough end of a bout with hostile canal boys, winning out through his wits and ability to "take it." A story any boy would eat up. An 1854 setting. Latest of a series by this author, dealing with immigrant youngsters from various countries.

Milo's New World, by Betty Morgan Bowen (Longmans, Green. \$2.25), finds children from war-torn Europe here as guests of Uncle Sam. Milo, from Yugoslavia, helps break the strangeness between them and their new neighbors. A lively tale, for ages seven to ten.

The Russian-American Song and Dance Book by Marion Bergman (A. S. Barnes. \$3) follows two earlier volumes published by the same company in similar vein: *The Chinese-American Song and Game Book* by A. Gertrude Jacobs, and *The Spanish-American Song and Game Book*, compiled by writers of the WPA program (each \$3). These collections of songs and games and dances have both usefulness and charm. The accompaniments are simple enough for readers with limited knowledge of the piano.

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